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CHIP.

THE

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BY MRS. MARY A. DENNISON.

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(No. 6.)

CHIP,

THE CAVE-CHILD.

CHAPTER I.

THE GRAVE — THE TAVERN KITCHEN.

"CHIP! Chip, I say! come here, Chip!"

An Indian woman, tall and gray, sat on a wooded height in the midst of a narrow clearing. The grand hills inclosing one of the most enchanting valley spots in Pennsylvania, rose abruptly on every side, crowned to the summit with lofty trees. It was a wild, high solitude, untrodden by the foot of enterprise. The moss had crept up the trunks of the old oaks whose years had seen generations pass away, and here and there the red berries of the mountain-ash gleamed jewel-like through a more somber foliage. Peak after peak, with clouds sailing grandly, like great ships, freighted with dew, down their green channels, the mountains lifted their brows bare to the sun.

Oh! what a glorious sight it was, to one standing there far above the level of common life, watching the crimsoned day departing. But not of this thought the wild, haggish woman who, out of rude materials, and with ruder implements, was carving what appeared to be a head-stone for a little grave. The clearing, with the exception of a narrow path opening down the hill to the westward, was heavily inclosed with oaks and maples. To the right was the mouth of a cave, thick set with scraggy bushes, whose rocky projections, covered with moss and furze, struck sharply out from the surrounding greenness. The woman was a picture in herself. She had an Indian face, furrowed with grief or passion. Her cheeks were hollow, giving an unnatural prominence to the bones under the eyes. Startlingly black, the iris of her eye seemed sometime swimming in fire, for the ball was crossed with red streaks. Her long, ebon locks were partly gathered up, partly falling upon her broad, gaunt shoulders. Her forehead was high, narrow, and seamed with many lines; her lips wore a fierceness in their compressed muscles that seemed ever ready to spring out and fasten upon an enemy; and just now she seemed to have fallen into a tigerish mood peculiar to her whenever overcome by any strong emotion. Her dress was of some dark and stiff texture, very scant, badly made, and not very cleanly. Her complexion was the tawny, olive-cast of an Indian.

"Chip! Chip, I say!" she cried again, suspending her work and bending toward the opening of the cave; "come here, child — better come quick."

By this time, a child, with a face of unearthly whiteness, bleached by the absence of sun and light, appeared at the aperture. Her neck was of such tenuity that it looked like a reed, and her little hands and arms were thin and almost unnaturally long. Her yellow hair was so extremely fine and free from moisture, that it hung about her like spray goldened by the sun. Energy, expression, life itself seemed void in her diminutive face. She looked like a bulb dug up from the earth before it has put out a single shoot of vitality. Her large, lack luster eyes floated loosely in wide, hollow sockets, and her fine brows beautifully curved, lifted uneasily as the imperious voice of the old woman ceased.

"Come here and see what I'm making," said the latter, harshly, and the child drew near; "do you see? it's a tombstone."

"A tombstone," repeated the child, mechanically; not with the eagerness of inquiry.

"Yes, a tombstone; and you poor little fool, if you could read, you'd see your own name upon it — Chip Nobody, aged eleven."

The child gave a most unchildish sigh, and looked steadily at the old woman, though the look was that of a somnambulist dreaming of unreal things.

"Now," said the old woman, garrulously, "I'm going to make believe you are dead and buried. I'm going to put you in that hole, see;" and she pointed to a cavity she had made, which was the receptacle of a queer-looking bag filled with bones; "now, that's you," she added, with a wild laugh —"remember, you're dead and gone to dust, and now I shall cover you up. There!" she exclaimed, stamping upon the little mound with a gesture almost of fury, "I've put it over you — put the mold of an accursed race upon your bones, and there you will lie; and *he* shall see it and howl, while you will be *worse* than dead." Then, changing her manner, she said, assuming a look of fear, "There, are the flaming eyes! run, Chip, run!"

Before the words were scarcely uttered, the child fled with a shriek of terror that echoed among the hill-tops, and the old woman, with a mocking laugh, bent down to place the headstone over the apparent grave. This done, she glanced about uneasily, muttering, "The storm is coming; the breath of the evening is warm close to the ground — the sky is copper-colored where the sun is going down, the swallows fly in among the tops of the trees in the valley — the white moon is in a ring; it will rain, hail, blow, and destroy. I will set out on my journey, or this young one will starve." So saying, she stooped down to the aperture, entered, drew the bushes close, and disappeared.

A great pitch-pine fire roared upon the hearth, making the shadows on the walls dance with a wild, jubilant motion. It was an old

time' tavern kitchen, the counterparts of which are seldom met with, save in some of the back settlements of Pennsylvania. All its smoky timbers and gigantic beams blushed a tawny red, illuminated by the cheery fire; and the faces of sundry travelers seated around the great hearth-stone glowed in the rich light. Most of the men were farmers and teamsters from the neighboring towns on their way home; their countenances were indicative of cheerful tempers, but gross feeling and low intellectuality. Before them stood a small round table, plentifully garnished with mugs of home-brewed beer, and flanked by a clayey-brown pitcher nearly empty. Without, the gusty wind ran shivering through the trees, hurtling itself against the small-paned casements, catching at shutters, and puffing occasionally down the broad mouthed chimney, sending curling clouds of smoke before it. Now it moaned like an old man who sinks in the waters, struggling no longer; now its shrieks were shriller than the eagle's cry and anon it sobbed like an infant in a troubled dream. It rained dismally, as it had rained all day, and the comfort-loving occupants of the old kitchen hugged themselves with pleasure as they thought of food, warmth, and their security from the tempest. The room was very long and low, and the gleam of the fire, intercepted by the shaggy backwoodsmen, did not reach the entire range, consequently the back part was in dim obscurity; but had one peered closely through the darkness, he would have seen the form of a boy, crouched in a low seat, and drowsing, for his head rested on his folded arms that he had gathered about his knees; he seemed coaxing himself to be warm and comfortable.

"Well, I s'pose we shall have to be making tracks here, putty soon," said a long, lank personage, whose attitude resembled that of an interrogation point, and as he spoke he ran his fingers through a shock of yellow hair. "As for me," he continued, "I be durned hungry — bean't you, Jeemes?"

"Certain I am," responded a thick-set man with watery eyes and a nose hooked like the beak of a parrot. "I've rid a matter of thirty miles since twal, and my innards rattle like a dice box. Now, boys, stir your stumps, for here comes Masty, short and crusty as ever, I'll be boun'."

A door opened in the center of the kitchen wall, admitting a dumpy figure with heavy, scarlet arms, bare to the elbow. A huge teakettle swung from one broad hand, and from the other dangled an old fashioned toasting-fork. Going directly up toward the curled figure of the boy, she touched him lightly with her foot, exclaiming, "Here, stupid time you was stirring — laying about here; these men wants their supper, and so, for that matter, do I myself. Go lay on the cloth and the dishes, an be spry about it, or mind your ears'll sting for 't."

"Hi! Masty, you shall have a husband when you're married, my smart girl," said a stout teamster, lighting his blackened pipe, and gazing at her with something of admiration through the smoke that followed his efforts.

"I'll be thankful then if I don't get such a loon as you," responded the girl, saucily, jerking the heavy kettle to the center of the crane, the water spouting out and sending little jets of steam in her face.

"Whoa!" cried the teamster, "the bit chafes."

"Does it?" replied Mastina, innocently, turning about, "let me see your tongue, and if it's blistered, I'll put a plaster on it."

"Ho, ho, ha ha!" rang out from the coarse company. The teamster's face grew red, and he took his pipe angrily from his mouth, when the parrot-nose struck him on the knee, saying, "Look here, man, save your wit; she's one too many for you; you'll get worsted if you try it with Masty's here; we've all given her up, long ago; she's got the vocabularity, as the parson says, on her tongue's end; so hush, man — take your lashing quietly."

Meanwhile, Masty worked away, raking the glowing coals to the center of the hearth, heaping them to the great ash-log. "Here, Nick," she cried to the boy, who was busy at the table, "bring me the split bread out of the pantry."

The boy came hurrying along with a heaping trayful. Mastina inserted one of the thick wheaten slices in the aperture of the fork saying, as she turned away —

"Here, you man that got *bit* so badly, see that toast doesn't brown too much," and giving him a laughing, roguish glance out of her bright eyes, she left the circle, saying, "now I've given you a *bit* of my tongue, I'll give you another kind of tongue for supper, something that'll be *neater*."

Again the men laughed out, and Mastina, flew now in, now out of the circle at the fire, her ready wit showering on all sides, her stout, short arms flashing about like the crimson wings of an industrious flamingo. The table was soon set with substantial fare, and Nick had gone back to his old position. At the ringing of the bell for supper, two persons came from the little parlor — a young, slender youth, and a gaunt, pale Quaker fellow-traveler, yet strangers to each other. The latter had his long locks combed smoothly behind his ears, where they rested on the straight collar of his Quaker coat. If nobility of character, integrity of heart, and great resolution combined with a singular simplicity that was almost childlike, were ever delineated by one feature of the human face divine, they were mapped out by the broad, yet not prominent brow of the Quaker preacher. He was in reality an embodiment of his profession, plain, stern, quiet — yet his gravity was tempered with a sweet smile, and his voice was exceedingly beautiful.

Still fell the rain in torrents, and blew the wind with a tempest violent, but, just as the travelers had seated themselves at the table, there came a lull, and a soft, sweet sound like a lute, or a rich organ-note, was distinctly heard outside the old inn. The men looked at one another, and Mastina, with whom the sound appeared familiar, laughed a little, exclaiming —

"She's out earlier than usual to-night."

"What [illegible]?" asked the stripling, [illegible], of [illegible] farmer who sat near him.

"[illegible]," replied the [illegible], [illegible] [illegible]."

"Yes, I [illegible]," replied the [illegible]. "And [illegible] tall dark woman?" he queried, turning to the Quaker.

"Yes, my friend," replied the preacher.

"[illegible] Mother K[illegible]?" asked Morton, pausing in the act of [illegible]; "[illegible], she'll be [illegible]; I wish she'd keep away."

"Ay, but we'll have rare fun with her though — she'll tell all our fortunes, and give us plenty to think about for the next six months," exclaimed the teamster.

"Does thee think that any but God can know the future, young man?" asked the Quaker, sternly."

The farmer [illegible], at this rebuke, but said nothing. The youth who had asked the question, pondered upon the mystery that had been hinted at by the man with the [illegible]. [illegible] when [illegible], and every [illegible] bank of every running river is peopled with fairy-folk. [illegible], Nick, as he sat in his accustomed place, [illegible] between his hands, a singular smile lighting his handsome but [illegible] face, [illegible] Mother Kunnegun was mentioned — and then, after a [illegible], he seemed to sleep again.

CHAPTER II.

THE STRANGER — HIS INTERVIEW WITH NICK.

"But what do they mean by [illegible]?" asked the young man, [illegible], turning to the Quaker preacher.

"[illegible]," replied the Quaker; "[illegible] years ago from the city of Philadelphia, [illegible]; some report that the Indian woman hath made way with her."

"Yes," said [illegible] teamster, [illegible] with [illegible] big swamp [illegible] of country, [illegible] I [illegible] it is, jest two miles."

"I've heard of running water, but I never heard of a running swamp," put in Morton, gravely.

"Oh! you jest hush, gal, I reckon I kin tell my own story," replied the teamster.

"We all knew you're a story teller," retorted the girl, "that's the reason people find it so hard to believe what you say — but don't mind my jerking you off. What did the swamp do after running its two miles?"

While the farmers were laughing at this sally, and at the disconcerted looks of the teamster, a cold, damp wind swept through the room, and the cheery voice of the little landlord was heard vociferating,

"Walk in, sir, walk right in; an awful night, yes, *that* you may say, sir — warm fire here, though, first-rate accommodations for man, not to say beast," cried the fat little landlord, rubbing his hands as he ushered in a tall, splendid figure wrapped in a heavy cloak: and with a great deal more noise and pomp than was agreeable to his plainer guests, and a great deal more parade than was acceptable to the stranger, he placed a chair by the blazing hearth, and then fidged about him, rubbing his hands and bobbing his little bullet-head as he enumerated the delicacies and comforts of his hostelry.

"Have any thing you'll be pleased to call for, sir — chicken, ham, tongue, salmon — there is pickled eels, there is corn beef — there is — Masty, my good girl, what is there we *haven't* got?" he asked, turning pompously, still rubbing his hands, toward the full table.

"We havn't any boiled baby, sir," replied the girl readily, causing a tittering from one end of the table to the other.

"What!" exclaimed the landlord, his little red eyes protruding, while the stranger, as he turned his head suddenly to see from whence came this quick reply, displayed a smile on a dark, singular face, irregular in feature, but still eminently handsome when not in repose.

"You asked me what we *didn't* have in the house, and I couldn't think of any thing *but* a boiled baby, as we've got most every thing else," replied Mastina, demurely.

"He, he, put to her wits you see, house is so full; every thing *but* boiled baby — he, he. Have supper here, sir, or in a private room — warmer here, sir — take some time to get the chill off — can set you a separate table just here by the fire, sir."

"That will do," replied the stranger, in a low tone — "look here landlord, have a good fire prepared, and my chamber well heated, for I shall want to retire soon; these chilling August storms coming before their time have given me an effectual shake," and he drew his cloak closer and shivered.

"Of course you'll have something *hot* right off," said the officious little landlord — "Nick, mix some hot brandy and water for this gentleman."

"No, no, if you please; I never drink brandy; give me a little ginger in some hot water — that will do."

"You hear the gentleman, Nick;" as the boy turned to go, the stranger bent an inquiring gaze upon him.

"A poor-house boy, sir — took him out of Williamsport poor-house — a peart little fellow — when I lost my negro Sam; but since then, sir, I think he's a little gin out — don't seem so smart and handy — thinks too much — sets still like a stick or stone, mostly — a strange young 'un, sir."

The traveler said nothing, but with a keen, almost painfully fixed glance, eyed the meagerly clad child now coming toward him with a little tray and a steam-covered tumbler. The boy was thin, and his clothes merely hung together. His complexion was dark, his features regular, with a softness of outline that blended well with the wavy, uncurled hair that hung over his gray eyes. He bore the stranger's glance with composure, even returned it with equal interest, and then fell back from the fire, as if it were an unaccustomed or forbidden indulgence to warm his poor limbs by such grateful embers. Meanwhile, the stranger drank leisurely, pressing his pale lips together after he had drained the tumbler, and knitting his brows as if lost in painful reflection; and Nick receiving orders to make a fire in the large chamber, walked slowly away with the tray and empty tumbler. When the farmers and hearty yeomen had finished their supper, they drew up again to the fire, this time making a wide circle. For some moments, restraint, caused by the new presence, kept them silent, and the stranger's eyes, after scanning quickly the sunburned faces, lingered with a longer glance upon the fair young face of Park Dinsmore, finding that refinement in countenance, and grace in bearing, that made him wonder how he became mixed in with the rest. The Quaker preacher, not finding the company congenial, had gone to his own room.

Martha, who was not a servant but a half sister of the landlord, quietly replaced the well-cleared table with finer linen and better fare, then drawing forward a seat she beckoned the stranger to partake, and poured out the tea, scanning his face with good-natured assurance.

"Now, I reckon you'll tell that story about the cave-child," exclaimed one of the yeomen, lazily stretching his feet nearer the fire.

At this query the stranger betrayed a startled mien, dropping his spoon, and partly turning his head to listen with more intentness; but apparently controlling himself he resumed his spoon, and with an abstracted manner discussed the viands placed before him, drank, or rather swallowed at a gulp his cup of tea, his hand trembling as he placed it back — and then complaining of diminished appetite, he arose from the table, and with as careless an air and expression as he could assume, seated himself in the midst of the little company, just as the teamster was saying, "It's a mighty dismal place that part of the country, and there ain't but one pair of feet, I reckon, that knows the way to tramp to it."

Nick, who sat a little back in the gloom, looked up with a quick intelligence lighting his features instinct with cunning, and making a rapid movement with his fingers, snapped them in the air.

"Who's them? why, they're the [illegible] old Indian mother Kirstegan, [illegible] and didn't the child live there till she died?"

At this a deadly pallor settled over the stranger's face.

"What proof have you that the child died?" [illegible]

"Why! old mother Kirstegan herself [illegible] the grave with her own hands, [illegible] ways to be seen on moonlight nights — and the [illegible] — always goes with it, storm or shine, wherever [illegible] is traveling. She's coming here to night, I'll venture."

"But [illegible] about the child?" [illegible] had crossed his knee, and, [illegible] brawny hand, was looking musingly into the fire.

"Well," returned the first speaker, "I've heard she was a [illegible] child, and I've heard she was [illegible] vessel; and I've heard what stories that other [illegible] you — did any of you ever hear that old [illegible] widow of an English ship — a pretty high [illegible] service?"

A general exclamation of surprise went round.

"Yes, she was *[illegible]*; [illegible] years, ship was taken by the Indians, [illegible] and this young [illegible] to England, put her into [illegible] her. Well, I've heard [illegible] years old [illegible] home, and [illegible] so that she died well, [illegible] and [illegible] and gave her [illegible] Well, [illegible] a [illegible] (with [illegible] — [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] Indian [illegible] home. But it had [illegible] [illegible] home. Well, nothing more [illegible] ten years scene."

The stranger, whose pallid [illegible] strong [illegible] and [illegible] strain, and in connection with the [illegible] story which, [illegible] was [illegible] stranger [illegible] the wind blew, the [illegible] his story:

"The old woman, she [illegible] for a long time; [illegible] I [illegible] for

ter, I never knew: most likely she died, as such poor unfortunits generally does; but our *gentleman* — I'd like to whale him with my last breath — got married to a certain young lady, they say, and in less than a year they had a little daughter. Well —" here he cleared his throat, turned himself more squarely toward the fire, drew a long lean and yellow leg therefrom from the breast-pocket of his shaggy brown jacket, applied it vigorously to his nose, shook himself like an overgrown dog, and glancing carelessly toward the stranger, resumed the story with an air of importance.

"Now you see, this Mother Karstegan wants to have her revenge. Who blames her? If a child is stolen,(for if her virtue be gone — which it is!) and the time comes for me to make 'em sting who wrongs me — who's to blame? It's true," he added, with an oracular shake of the head, "the good book says, leave all such things to Him who governs, but then He used to govern the people so't they stoned to death those that did such things. But that ain't nothing here nor there; I ain't no Christian; I doesn't pretend to be a Christian in the sense I take sich things."

The stranger still sat motionless, shading his forehead and eyes from the red heat; now he spoke abruptly, and his lips scarcely moved as he said — "Finish your story, my friend, it has interested me."

"I was going on to say," resumed the teamster, "that the old woman watched her chance and stole a child. I don't know in course exactly what she stole, but I can guess, and it's reasonable cheap to reckon that it was one that would be mighty missed. She took it to some cave among the hills here — where, nobody knows; and how the little critter fared, the Lord only knows, for no human eye that I know of has seen the old fortune-teller's cave-brat. It's my opinion, and I don't care, considering what a witch she is for telling things that come to pass, that the old one helps her, for I've tried more'n a hundred times, in a hundred different places, to keep my footing in that wet woods, and the mud is almost always deep, wherever *I* go been."

"Does your father is sick," said the young man, Park Dinsmore, springing from his seat.

The stranger did indeed tremble from head to foot, but he controlled his great emotion, whatever had caused it, and moving his chair a little back, said —

"The heat is quite oppressive;" then added, faintly, and in a voice whose steadiness was assumed, "you say the child really died?"

"Sure doesn't it," exclaimed the parent-hoss, eager for a share of the notice appropriated by his garrulous friend, "*I* know it; who's to tell? Old Mother Karstegan says so — but sometimes she says she's bad herself — there's no understanding her."

"Why have not the proper authorities seen into this matter?" demanded the stranger, sternly; "shame on you all, to let a poor innocent babe be murdered in the backwoods."

"What do you suppose would have to put the matter out?" asked another; "and as to the authorities, they are as much afraid of old Mother Karstegan as they are of their old master, the devil. It's a

black thing that ever crept, sir, do you think it any worse to steal a child, than to deceive a woman?"

The question was a heavy one, and before the stranger's agitation would allow him to answer, some one said —

"Hallo! there's old Mother Kettlegan herself. Come along, come along — now, boys, for fun!"

A stamping, and a shrill, sharp voice, like the rattle of a hoof and the yelping of a dog, were heard outside the door. The stranger arose with a disappointed manner, and hastened back to the town hall to his room. It was not without low, faltering steps, nor how haggard and white his face had grown; all were looking curiously for the appearance of the weird woman whose name had monopolized the evening's conversation.

The boy, with a drowsing light in one hand, led the way through a long entry, colonnade of crazed arches, to a stage, upon which flight of stairs, clung through a wooden passage, terminating in one small narrower that diverged to the right, and having hooked on the latch, threw open the door. The chamber contained a roaring wood fire, and its bright and cheerful glare, falling upon whitewashed walls and white hangings of a high-post bedstead, gave the new comer room a home-like aspect, and the room as neatness, and the room great its home-like cheerfulness against the dreary night, the cheerful light and warmth seemed lively by contrast.

"This will do," muttered the stranger, surveying the matted floor, the wide fireplace, the quaint furniture, and the antique panels of cracked and blackened oak. "Leave the lamp, boy, and hold this portmanteau, while I unlock it."

Nick did as he was told, looking curiously into the stranger's face while he performed the command. The latter stood, his cloak half swinging from his strong figure, a frown upon his brow; but as it suddenly resolved into a smile, he put the boy to the lock, opened it, threw back the portmanteau, and commenced again the study of the boy's features.

"What is your name?" he asked at length, folding his arms over his chest.

"Nick, sir," said the boy, humbly.

"Well, and what else?"

"Po-lemus, they call me sometimes, sir. I has no other name."

"How old are you, Nick?"

"Don't know, sir."

"Where were you born?"

"I don't know, sir; I wasn't there," replied the boy innocently; "I guess nobody don't know; some days they say I was left there in a basket."

"Left where?"

"In the parish workhouse, sir: that's where the master took me from."

"So, you don't know any thing about yourself?" repeated the man.

"No, sir, only here I be," said the boy with a quick intelligence.

"How long do these storms last in this part of the country? Put your hair back — so; now, look me in the face; how long did you say?"

"Sometimes two days or so, sometimes a week; there's a plenty of folks," repeated the boy.

"And does this old Dame with" — the stranger stopped and leaned generally toward the door, "[illegible]?"

The stranger had drawn his wide cloak tight about him, and resting his head on one hand, sat like a dark statue, looking from the [illegible] of state.

"Yes, Mother Kurtesgan comes in the rain, always; she never goes off other times, cause somebody'll maybe find her out there."

"Did you" — the stranger paused, and his eyes grew tall, and his brow flashed till the veins stood out, and then, after a very little pause, he ventured again — "did you ever see the little child they were speaking of?"

"Oh, yes, I used to, sometimes, till she died; you see, I left that place, and was almost starved, and Mother Kurtesgan found me and kept me ever so long."

"How did she look, my boy?"

"She was pale; she was [illegible]," replied the boy; "me and old Mother Kurtesgan is the only [illegible] to get through that place — there's [illegible] of them."

"Will you go there for me, my boy?"

Nick cowered, and his face changed.

"I wouldn't dare!" he said, in [illegible]; "[illegible] why? she'd turn me into an owl or a [illegible] that to me [illegible] many a time."

"Fool!" muttered the man. Then suddenly his mood changed, and in a harsh voice he said, "[illegible] you. I'll give you gold; see here!" and he pulled out a handful of [illegible], and rattled them before the eyes of the boy; "will you go for these?"

"I darsn't, indeed, darsn't! old Mother Kurtesgan is powerful wicked, she'd kill me to onst," cried the boy, "I wouldn't go for all the money in the world!"

Louder and louder, vying with the great gusts without, rose up the shouts of laughter from the kitchen.

"Stop," said the stranger, as Nick was crawling back into his wonted position; "the old woman tells fortunes, don't she?"

"Yes, great ones," replied the boy; "they [illegible] and a [illegible] — I guess she be, too."

"Well, go down and say to her that a person wants her to tell him his fortune; and show her this," and he [illegible] gold piece into the boy's hand.

Nick departed with alacrity; he had felt a [illegible] in the presence of this man. The stranger was left [illegible] with his own thoughts, which, to judge by the expression of his countenance,

were none the pleasantest. Very cheerful looked the low, wainscoted chamber, with its brown, broad beams over head, its scrupulously white half-curtains, its hearth-mat and [illegible] of [illegible] cloth, displaying yellow roses on red stems. Generously cheerful, it was in contrast to the [illegible] storm that beat continuously against the windows.

CHAPTER III.

MOTHER KURSTEGAN AND THE STRANGER.

As the stranger's tall form disappeared from the kitchen, the old Indian woman entered. She was a person, as before mentioned, of a gaunt but powerful frame, and to-night the coarse skin hung in wrinkles, and her face, sharp and sinister, told the story of [illegible] and a hard contention with fate. Her [illegible] eyes [illegible] hid in her [illegible] brows, and [illegible] the [illegible] of her [illegible] as the Indian [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible]. Her [illegible] were wet and [illegible]; she sat down, and [illegible] she threw [illegible] her head [illegible] with long streams, and [illegible].

"I don't know ye, only one or two," she said, in a [illegible], and [illegible] to the [illegible]; "you [illegible] a [illegible], and [illegible] ye [illegible] or [illegible] a [illegible] of [illegible], I reckon. Where's that Mercy? I want a [illegible] or something — I'm hungry."

"I thought you lived upon [illegible], Mother Kurstegan," said the parrot-nose, removing his pipe, "with [illegible], and [illegible] for potatoes. I've heard that it [illegible] up [illegible], and all you have to do is to put out your [illegible] and [illegible]."

The Indian only shook her fist at him, and seated herself on the floor.

"Ye are all a set of unmannerly [illegible]," she said, [illegible], "not to give an old woman a seat and a bit of the [illegible], [illegible] to the [illegible]; only your own [illegible] know what it is to want the same favor!"

"Oh, [illegible], Mother Kurstegan," said one and another, [illegible]; and young [illegible] with [illegible], [illegible], and [illegible] it [illegible] the [illegible], [illegible]. [illegible] ugly and uncouth as she was.

"Ugh! I like you," said the old woman, taking the seat, "and if you wasn't a pretty boy, I'd give you a good [illegible]," and she shook her head, looking at him [illegible].

"Here Mother Kurstegan, here's a piece of money; take it and tell *my* fortune," said the parrot nose, [illegible] her a sixpence.

"Shall I?" cried the old woman, snapping the silver, while the red blaze gave her face an expression of mental fire; "well, then, in the first place, your wife will be lame in one leg, without in one hand, blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, and have a tongue that will measure you for your coffin."

A shout of laughter followed the Irish dissertation of the man.

"She shall be sick forty-two weeks in the year," added the Indian, [illegible] with a gesture of triumph, "and [illegible] water-fowl, scalding water to [illegible] and dip your head in a barrel of tar if you don't do whatever she tells you to."

"Hurrah! hurrah!" cried the teamster, clapping his hands.

"And you," said the old woman, turning sharply toward him, "will go further and fare worse."

"Oh, now, Mother Korstegan," said the teamster, with a look of real complacencement, "you said I should have Mary only a week ago!"

"Did I? well — hemph! if you can *get* her, so you may," relented the crone, nodding her head to the line.

"Mother Korstegan has got something on her mind," said an old farmer, with a shake of gray hair and a [illegible], as he poured the tobacco into a fresh pipe; "she used to do [illegible] with it, but she's gone out; her memory ain't what it was once, and he can't say she's [illegible] as she used to be."

"My memory!" cried the old woman, with flashing eyes and a clear voice; "hags! witches! you don't say of you know what it is to have heart and your brain as with red hot iron, and a [illegible] that the waters of all the seas can't wash out. I'm a [illegible] old woman!" she added, in a softened, melancholy tone.

Poor Dessoute turned with new interest to the [illegible] face, and saw evidently not his scrutiny, for she [illegible] eyes to his face, and, with a sudden alteration, exclaimed:

"Boy, I will read your destiny; come hither;" then, taking her spectacles and a small hand as he moved towards her, she took his, and scanned the palm intently.

"For his first respects old age," she said, solemnly, and in a low tone, "[illegible] or velvet, whether with the crown of a [illegible] his head or the beggar's cap, I would, if in my power, [illegible] — job, jolting [illegible], [illegible] in your destiny."

"I'll [illegible] mother," replied the handsome youth, smiling as he spoke.

"Ay! that's [illegible]," she muttered, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Mary, Mother of God, [illegible] Mother, and wear his [illegible] [illegible] You were born to a [illegible]; you were [illegible] a [illegible]," she paused for a moment, as if [illegible] [illegible] [illegible];

"you have crossed mountains and rivers and seas — you have been in danger many a time, and will be again."

"Just so, mother," said the youth, looking all the astonishment the correctness of her language called forth.

"There's a high house on a hill," she continued, "gazing down upon meadows and fields, and far away from any settlement. And I see you there, after the trouble is over, happy, rich, and contented. And I see by your side a young wife — for you would seem to choose the loveliest woman," she almost shouted, raising one hand to her head in a frenzied way — but, calming herself, she continued, "and she has the brightest gold-brown hair, and the softest brown eyes and the reddest cheeks I ever saw. Ay, she's a pretty young creature, and she has seen sorrow, too. And there are three little children, one a beautiful baby — there isn't that man nor woman would do you the harm to wish a black wish to that sweet little boy — but I've known, ah, *I've* known what I wouldn't tell you;" she paused, holding up one skinny forefinger, while in the hall the soft, solemn strain of the storm came floating by. The farmers looked at one another and shrugged their shoulders. At that moment Misty came in, with her hands full of eatables, which she set on the table, saying,

"Here, Mother Kurstegan, ain't you hungry after your long tramp? Come and eat something."

While the old woman devoured the food, keeping up a running fire of wit with Mistina (for she seemed to have the faculty of adapting her language to the company she was in), the men laid their heads together, and presently, as the old woman came toward the fire again, one of them cried out,

"Say, Mother Kurstegan, is that cave-child really dead?"

"Well, yes, the storm has been mighty powerful up our way," replied the old woman, with readiness, indifferently holding her hands toward the fire; "did you say you was afraid?"

A loud laugh followed.

"You don't git round us that way, old lady," said the Pennsylvania teamster; "we've heerd stories as how the gal was living yit, and by jingo! it's a mighty mean shame to keep a little gal in hides t'wat 'ere way, any how!"

"If you ever speak of that to me again," shouted the old woman, turning so fiercely upon the teamster that he pushed his chair from the hearth, "I'll tell the company which of your relations got hung."

"And I'll tell which of yours ought to be," replied the teamster his temper flashing up in his face, "and she ain't far from it, either."

The Indian woman, with an unexpected and vigorous blow, sent the man backward, chair and all; and the teamster lay half-way rolling over in his chair to regain his balance. As he slowly arose, with a face of ashy whiteness, shout after shout of laughter made the rafters of the old room ring again. Fortunately, at this moment, Nick

came with the message from above stairs, and while Masty, laughing till the tears ran down her cheeks, brushed the sand from the teamster's back, the old woman, draggling her wet garments after her, trailed her way out of the kitchen.

Nick, not well aware whether he did right or wrong, followed at a safe distance up the stairs, but she tramped rapidly as if she knew the way by heart, and shot into the chamber, shutting the door behind her. The boy crouched down close by the threshold, wondering what the stranger could possibly want of old Mother Kurstegan. Meanwhile, as the evening was waning toward midnight, the men dispersed to their beds, and Mastina raked up the fire in the kitchen.

As the Indian bedlame entered the room where sat the stranger, and which was now lighted only by one flickering flame, she advanced to the fireplace, and stood with folded hands, looking uneasily about her. The candle had been extinguished, and its unsavory smell filled the room; the high blaze had evidently been smothered with water, for the ashes were blown about the hearth as if by a sudden concussion. The stranger still sat in the great arm-chair, his cloak about his shoulders, a dark silk handkerchief bound over his temples, his face resting on his left hand.

"They say you tell fortunes, good woman," he said, lifting his eyes uneasily, and letting them fall again, while his lips locked together with such pressure that their outline was almost lost. At the sound of his voice the woman turned her head slightly, and it was fully a moment before she answered.

"Yes, I tell fortunes when there is any fortune to tell; but sometimes those that hear me wish that I had held my tongue;" she said coldly.

"I sent for you to tell mine, and if you hit the truth in any thing you say, I will give you a gold piece."

"Let me see your hand," said the woman, coming close to him — then as she took it she dropped it, and said, "that's the hand of a man that's seen a mighty sight of trouble — and," she added in a lower tone — "done a mighty deal of harm."

"Go on," he said, coldly.

The woman shuddered as if conscious of an evil presence.

"I like to see a man's face when I tell his fortune," she said, evasively; "light the candle so that I may count the lines in your forehead."

"Is your art, then, dependent upon such paltry tricks?" exclaimed the stranger, impatiently. "I thought you read from intuition, and a knowledge of your —" he said no more, for the Indian stepping back had changed to a fury. Her eyes, naturally large, flashed like fire, while the scars on her dark face quivered and deepened, and her lips grew pale. Slowly the man lifted himself from his seat, gazing with a cowardly fear showing under his assumed surprise, and almost cowering under her gaze. At last he spoke, "It is I who suffer most, woman; give me my child!"

In vain she strove to speak. Her gaunt frame shook, her pa-

Eyes trembled, her long, sinuous locks writhed upon her [illegible], — her hands clutched at the air — but she hissed at her [illegible] teeth, "Accursed of God and man — give me back my child. You made my life a desert; you tore it out of my heart; you [illegible] not mine. Vipers! stand there and look. I [illegible] the air below; your trail was on the ground I passed over; your breath tainted the storm."

"Silence, hellhound!" cried the man with a fierce gesture, "and tell me, where is my child? Look! I will give you gold — a fortune if you will restore her. Her mother is dying, broken hearted; tell me where she is?"

"Go look at her bones," said the other in a low, exulting voice, "they are all that's left of your delicate baby; and so she is dying — ah! ha, ha, ha, ha! and the child is dead — ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"Dead!" and the man seemed to lose power as he stood — "dead"! he repeated in a blank voice.

"You like news, you like *good* news, don't you?" said the woman bitterly, "you're an editor and give the people news; go spread it, tell of the old Indian woman who could talk like a lawyer; it will make your paper sell — but I'll whisper something in your ear — oh! don't be afraid of me — I've lost the Indian taste for cruelty by hearing how a white folks kill; the child isn't dead, nor likely to be. But let me tell you, Horace Le Vargn, you will never see your child."

Why record the frenzied recriminations, the awful imprecations that passed in the chamber of that old man, who, in his fright and terror, [illegible] to listen, and in his fright sometimes sprang to his feet to run, but becoming by the sound of discord, he stood [illegible], [illegible], pausing a pause at the door, left the chamber, [illegible] over the threshold.

CHAPTER IV.

CHIP BEGINS TO SEE THE WORLD.

No one seemed to give a moment's thought to the old Indian woman, who, in the extremity of her rage, had [illegible] of the large kitchen, whither she had [illegible] her way, [illegible] ing, cursing, pitching her [illegible] to [illegible]

The fire had been carefully raked over, and [illegible] the room, yet up and down she [illegible], like a [illegible] hurling [illegible] hoarsely, that had [illegible] reaching words, and the excitement of the night, [illegible] have been [illegible]. Exhausted at last by [illegible], the poor [illegible] turned [illegible] toward the [illegible], and cast the [illegible] down, [illegible] and [illegible], and

then crouched down by their genial warmth. Presently she gathered some of the remnants of clothing and threw them on, blowing the embers, and kindling anew, till they sent a crackling blaze among the light wood.

"There!" she muttered, "now it would be a satisfaction to burn them at *his* door, and let them burn, burn."

She sat rocking herself to and fro, with knitted brows and lips working convulsively. The bright flame gave to her gray, scowl-ridden countenance, stamped as it was with evil passions, and thrown into bold relief the colors with which, with the gaudy taste of the Indian, she had painted her grotesque attire. Now and then the shadows of the tall chairs and heavy curtains trembled along the floor; the old clock ticked with monotonous tones, and the sighing wind, like an evil presence, moaned down the chimney.

"They was with him. Now," she muttered again; "yes, yes! it was he who ran under me — the little one to steal. And this night will lure him to go to the cave — lure him to my — No, no; Mistress Hutchinson is coming, coming, and crowd though ye all thither her; she'll be traveling by day-light, while the rest are sleeping in their beds — and somebody must go with her; yes, somebody must go with her," she added, in a shrill, sing-song, trembling voice.

Addressing herself to the matter, the old woman prepared to sleep. Occasionally she would start, raise herself upon one elbow, peer about the kitchen, and then lie down — listen intently, with a glare in her wild eyes, but gradually fatigue overcame her and she sank into a fitful slumber. Her feline face shut up, pouting her lips, eyes and sunken cheeks a color as blue, she stretched along the fading embers, and finally dozed out, leaving her in the deep, brooding gloom, asleep.

Her heart struck fear, when Mistress entered the kitchen with a lighted candle. Working straight up to the fireplace, she had almost thrown over the outstretched figure of the old woman, who had not yet awakened.

"Land! you old witch!" she grumbled, when her momentary fright was over, "what's the use of taking you here? Hey, old woman, Mother Carson, or Kenton, or — whatever your name is," she cried, stamping her foot, "come, I've got work to do — get breakfast for a dozen hungry beasts who calls themselves men, and expects a woman to get up before sunrise, if she's worked as hard as they have. Yes," she continued, "it's a disgraceful thing to see a woman toiling as I am, — to be imposed by two great, strong beasts. I say, you old witch, don't you hear?"

"Yes, yes; but you can't have the child; you can't have the child — no, not if you crowed your heart's blood," muttered the old woman, rousing herself, and hastily turning her bleared eyes, and hastily throwing her bleared eyes.

The old hostess, [illegible] by her companion, [illegible]

blew through the kitchen; the door was left open through which Mother Kurstegan had gone; a pool of water, formed during the night, lay in the hollow passage way, and the damp bushes at the door sprinkled their heavy tears upon the gray stone slab outside.

The road was skirted by thick woods, and the Indian pressed on under the perpetual showering from the trees. The wind blew dismally, penetrating the folds of the water-soaked blanket folded about her gaunt, haggard figure. Through her dull eyes, the way was dark before her, but the morning was breaking cold and gloomily. Some times she hummed the snatch of an old tune; sometimes muttered in Delaware, her native dialect, often she paused, and with lips firmly set shook her head defiantly; sometimes she whistled, or strained her ear to listen for the wheels of some early teamster, who might, through fear if not compassion, indulge her with a ride as far as he went. Soon the opaque atmosphere brightened a little, giving form and color to the drizzling rain that fell unwearied ly. As she journeyed on, the country became more open and rugged. Miniature hills alternated with miniature valleys; masses of rock unevenly piled, relieved the monotony of bush and stunted pine. At length coming to a strange formation of stone and earth, over which the huge branches of a century-elm fell with a picturesque effect, and where a new pine growth spread foliage and roots, the old woman paused. Looking about her to be sure no one was near, she parted the scraggy covering, crept through what appeared to be a fissure in the rock, and emerged on the other side into a low wooded ravine, and from thence into a tract of woods untouched by the hand of the pioneer. Along a path scarcely discernible, and filled now with branches and whatever the torrents had brought from the hills she made her way into the thicket. With a dexterity that betrayed a practised eye, she picked a narrow trail, sometimes sinking feet deep into a morass, and availing herself of overhanging branches or rotten logs, which she had evidently placed there with her own hands, she came to the base of the hill on the summit of which she dwelt. The way up this steep ascent, wooded to its top, was toilsome in the extreme. Many a time her strength failed her utterly, and she sat upon a stunted knoll or jagged rock, and bent her head upon her hands. It was late in the morning when she gained the little spot, where her hut was placed by the strong hand of nature. Drawing aside the bushes by which the entrance was concealed, she glided noiselessly within the rough dwelling. The floor was dry and carpeted richly with crust-like moss. Through another opening near the roof, the interior of this singular home became dimly visible. A furnace stood near the door filled with ashes. Two rude seats were ranged against the rough walls, with some regard to order, a large board being propped up between, answering for a table. A bed of dried moss in a covering of blue check lay in one corner, and on it, in this solitary, cheerless place, where no white man's footfall had ever sounded, shut in by forest trees, matted bushes and thick branches, lay a little child, a lovely little child, with pale cheeks, diminutive figure, and long, golden-tinted, glossy hair.

streaming over the coarse pillow. Mother Kurstegan went toward her, stooped and gazed earnestly for a moment, then turned to her duties. Untying a bundle, in which, the night before, she had thrown the remnants of her supper, she laid them upon the table. Then she threw off her wet shawl, hung it upon a projection of the rock, and taking from beneath the bed some decent garments, she changed her draggled clothes for dry ones. Setting her furnace near the mouth of the tiny cave, she struck a fire with flints and tinder, and placed a nondescript utensil, filled with water, on the furnace top. Then from a box she took meal, and kneading it into a flat cake, set it to bake. Next she examined the child's clothes that lay beside her bed. They were large and coarse, and had been made out of her own garments. Taking from an old worn basket a needle and some thread, she proceeded to stitch together such parts as needed repairing, muttering the while about her miserable sight; and after this was done, she made a little bundle of the clothes, and with a heavy sigh that spoke of regret, proceeded to waken the child.

"Chip, Chip, wake up!" she cried touching the delicate shoulder with her hard hand.

The little girl, accustomed to her voice, sprang upright and her wild eyes, in which a sweet yet mournful expression was predominant, turned instinctively toward the old Indian woman. She spoke not a word, but a wan, almost vacant smile flitted for a moment over her pensive features, and she pressed her little hands to her head with unchildish meaning in her look.

"Come, and dress yourself and eat your breakfast, for we've a long tramp to go this day."

The child turned again and gazed into the old woman's face, as if not comprehending the import of her language.

"Don't look so like a heathen, child," exclaimed Mother Kurstegan, "don't you want to see something of the world, poor little fool? don't you think it's almost time? Only think! ten long years, and you've never taken one step outside this wilderness. Well it don't know what the world is, but it shall, soon enough. Come, stop staring, I say, will you? and dress yourself! I'm going to carry you where you shall open your eyes before night."

A bewildering joy possessed the child; every fiber of her frame quivered; every nerve thrilled. In the intensity of the hate nursed by a shattered mind, it had been the old woman's policy to tell the wildest, most extravagant tales about the world beyond the little cave. And she had also taught her the darkest lessons of fear, filling the brain of the poor little girl with specters of horrible import, and beasts of hideous form, so that when the shadows fell upon the cave-hut, Chip, if alone, crept shuddering into her bed, and knew no God of whom to invoke peace and protection. But she had also told her that away beyond the precincts of her isolated dwelling-place, beyond the hills which she had watched glittering and glowing with the treasures of sun and dew, was the great world, where

houses were made of solid gold, and streets were filled with flowers and angels with shining wings; and there was the sweetest light there and the richest music, and we should have wandered [illegible], and learn strange and wonderful things, and see wonders of splendor.

At this, the poor little child, who had been, without her protection, seen only between the [illegible] of the old Indian woman, who had for the first time [illegible] in the shape of a [illegible], and with the [illegible] changed into a little girl, [illegible] and prepared then to be to feel with delicious pleasure. Her eyes [illegible] like stars; she kept [illegible] her breath in great [illegible], and trembled from excessive delight.

"Shall we see the *bad* creatures, too?" she suddenly asked, shivering at the thought, "and if we do, can you keep them away from me?"

"I told them all this morning that I should present the words with you and commanded them to come to their resting-places in the dark caves that stretch wide under neath the earth, and where all the winds and the storms, the thunder and lightning are kept," replied the old woman, with a gravity that might have impressed an older person than Chip. "I am to go as I please with them," she continued, "but I should not let you see the [illegible] unless I please; see, I bind your eyes so," and she made a few [illegible] passes over the child's forehead. "Now, say you will [illegible] something until I can carry. There will come a great king with a [illegible] crown upon his head, and he will take you to his palace, and make you a little queen."

"Oh," cried the wan child, with sparkling eyes and cheeks, clapping her hands as she spoke, "I am so glad!"

"I see your fall of a [illegible]," muttered the strange [illegible], turning her back, "you will never be glad again, [illegible]."

After they had eaten their simple meal, the old woman, bidding the child remain quiet, went out to take a look at the little [illegible] of a grave. Trying the [illegible], to see that it was firmly imbedded in the ground, and then [illegible] over it with an air of triumph, she again entered the cave, and prepared the child for her first entrance into the world [illegible] its [illegible].

All things were duly prepared, and the Indian woman and her poor little protege commenced their journey down the [illegible] hill. For the first half hour, the child [illegible] lively [illegible], [illegible] and chattering every [illegible], and [illegible] Mother Kamogan [illegible] her in her [illegible], and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] could hope to discern.

"What the world [illegible]?" whispered the child.

"No, no! Hark, while I talk to them," [illegible] in a low, monotonous tone:

"A[illegible] of evil;
A[illegible];
I [illegible]
I[illegible]
Y[illegible]
I[illegible];
[illegible],
Your fingers have touch'd the wintergreen;
Y[illegible],
[illegible];
[illegible],
[illegible],
Y[illegible] glass.
I[illegible]
I can not give this child to ye!"

All this time, poor little Chip, with her eyes closed hard and scarcely breathing for fear, lay trembling, and dreading she knew not what; but presently, feeling a cooler wind upon her cheek, she suddenly found herself thrust through an aperture, standing and shivering on the wet ground, the water-drops sparkling as they dripped on her head from the branches of the great elm.

"There!" exclaimed Mother Karstegan, "we are out of the woods, and now, come to see these great sights, we must walk on, on, a long ways till the sun goes down."

The child scarcely heard; such new and mingled emotions took possession of her [illegible] soul. She gazed about her. There lay [illegible] field but lately mown; and [illegible] every spear was golden-tipped. The sky above — such heavens of shining blue! such a wide, wonderful, glorious expanse, [illegible] with thousands of little white clouds, soft as the snow, [illegible]! She walked along, wing-footed; her eyes bright, [illegible] with a fiery delight.

The day was almost gone. The last [illegible] had been eaten for [illegible] hours ago, and foot-sore and tired, poor Chip could not walk any farther. She was very hungry; her feet were bleeding — for although Mother Karstegan had [illegible] the child was wholly unaccustomed to walking, and her feet were thickly [illegible]. Evening was coming on, and the child to whom the novelty of sight-seeing had grown stale, wondered when she should see those great people, [illegible], the king with a crown on his head.

Mother Karstegan [illegible] the bright [illegible]. She [illegible] on a rock by the wayside, [illegible], by the [illegible], and [illegible] left her to [illegible]. Scarcely had she [illegible] before poor [illegible] Chip, [illegible] began to cry bitterly. As she sat there, the tears falling over her [illegible], she saw, far down the road, a strange thing that looked so evil, she did not doubt it was one of those frightful [illegible] that the old woman had often conjured up on the walls of their lonely home. She grew colder

and whiter, and held her breath, and clasping her hands without power to move, as the terrible object, with a noise that seemed louder than thunder, came rumbling along, with two fearful creatures abreast.

"Halloa!" shouted a coarse voice; "that's somethin' human."

The monster market-wagon came to a dead stand opposite the frightened child, and a man with a heavy beard, and shortening straw-hat flapping over his sunburned face, and upon his farmer's frock, surveyed the shrinking child fixedly.

"Got lost, little one?" he asked.

No answer — only the wild eyes glared, and seemed to throb with fright.

"Hilloa! Say, little girl, are you lost?" he asked again. Still the child was utterly incapable of replying, but she sobbed and moaned in a pitiful way.

"Well! this is a strange fix for a young 'un like that, seems to me. Must been walking all day, too; little feet bleeding — sho! looks tired to death. Here little one," he soliloquized, moving to descend from his wagon; "night's a coming mighty fast, and whether you're strayed, lost, or stolen, I shall take you up and tote you home — 'taint more'n a Christian duty. Whoa! Jeff, while I git out and take this youngster, in."

Chip had not stirred, could not move. A deathly sickness came over her as she felt the grasp of the strong-handed man, and found herself swinging up in the great wagon, and presently deposited upon some soft straw behind the seat. Fear had paralyzed every energy; she shivered with a vague horror that she was to be thrown into some hole with all the imaginary hobgoblins that her demented old keeper had taught her to fear. Meanwhile Mother Kurstegan had gazed the house, little dreaming, as she paused to tell a young girl's fortune, that the treasure she had periled so much to obtain and to keep, was even then a mile from the spot where she had left it in seeming security.

CHAPTER V.

IN VAUGN VISITS THE CAVE — CHIP'S NEW HOME

"WHOA, you beast — whoa."

The sound reached Le Vaugn, who opened his window and gazed into the stable-yard. Every dry stick, leafless twig, and withered grass-blade, was gemmed with dew, and the wide area of the tavern was all astir. Turkeys, hens, chickens, cats, and dogs, stared in mute wonder at the vision of the old coach and the lean horse that Job Goodale prized next to his wife and child.

"Stage ready!" cried Park, mounting with a flourish, handling the reins in true driver-style, and turning the lumbering vehicle, out of whose broken windows looked the pleasant face of the professor — and away they drove.

Le Vaugn turned from the window, to prepare for his visit to the cave. Breakfast over, his horse was brought round, Nick placed on the saddle behind him, and they proceeded on their way. It was a cool, but vividly fresh and lovely morning. The dew lay like crowded jewels on the bushes by the wayside, lighted with splendor by the sun. The gaudy flowers of autumn expended all their vitality in bloom, and the closely-set edges of the road, bordered with pines, oaks, and maples, gave out their peculiar odor.

The sun was two hours high when they neared the spot which Nick remembered as having passed through, and which now, even with the presence of Le Vaugn, he trembled to approach. The previous rains had saturated and swollen the earth, and at every step the mud and water oozed up over their feet. Le Vaugn tied his horse, drew his boots up outside his nether garments, and after surveying the bush and peering in vain through the matted undergrowth, essayed to thrust himself through on the other side.

"You see I'm waiting for you."

The voice was low, hollow, and unearthly. Nick stood shivering in every limb, and Le Vaugn glanced aghast as the gaunt form of Mother Kurstegan lifted itself from the forest-gloom, and her chuckle defiant with suppressed malice, sounded on his ear.

"Did you expect to find it with *that* witling?" she asked, pointing to Nick, who crouched away with terror. "He! ha! set a fool to lead a fool on a fool's errand. Come, you see I expected you, and so waited; if you want proof I'm ready to give it."

So saying, she plunged into the path, and Le Vaugn followed her, forgetting Nick, who, in his excitement and terror, clung to the place through which he had emerged, and as soon as he lost sight of the two, eagerly found his way out into the road.

"Take care, don't break your neck," muttered the old woman, turning at every plunge, and smiling grimly at the bespattered object in her rear; "this is a swampy place, reckon you think; it isn't like the city streets you're used to, is it, honey."

Thus mockingly she taunted him, until they came on firmer ground, and began the ascent of the hills.

"See, now, isn't this a fine open place to bring up a child?" at last she said, pausing and confronting him; "no brick walls, no stabled yards — all nature, grand nature, my own mother once" she cried, lifting her arms, "before the curse of the white man came upon me. Six long years they sent me to the schools, and took pride in my quickness and my genius; but it was only a curse to the Indian girl; sorrow was the first great lesson, made stronger and keener by the possession of knowledge. And the same with my own child. Oh! why didn't I take her into the wilderness and bring her up in solitude, never to see the face of man? Come, come

along," she added, in another mood, "I've got a nice little grave to show you, up here."

The words and the manner struck a deadly chill through the frame of the strong man, but he followed on, through his teeth set together, and his heart filled him for fear. At length they reached the hut, when, springing inside the little door, the Indian exclaimed:

"Now you may go away as wise as you came; I can defend myself, and you can't come in here, for I, over a tigress sought to revenge the lost of her young, I am she."

Le Veren dared not enter; he felt that if he did so it would be at the peril of his life. He turned, and the little shaft of wood, with the epitaph burnt thereon, met his sight. With a great cry he wrenched the board out from the soft ground, and then he knelt and crouched down by the door of the cave, hearing he heard the click of a gun-lock.

"The hag! she will murder me, for aught I know; the place and the hour are fit. Hark!" and he listened again, then sought to find crack or crevice that he might look within, but in vain — all was silent.

As he stood there, the toilsy beads at his feet, his lips locked together, his teeth clenched, and with wild cries, groaning round at the regal surroundings of his natural — the grand sky above him, the chasm beneath — his thoughts were in pitiful, and as frozen with the intensity of his emotions. His eyes, dry and bright, would not restlessly from the sky to the tracks of wolves below, as if he would find some traces of the little child's feet, for he would not believe her dead. His cheek, usually cold pale, now flushed and palpitating, betrayed by the rapid contrast to the terrible state of thought. In his hand he held a finely lighted torch, a crash on which was the sound of footsteps, looking eagerly stared forward in his white garments. In the pale, sweet, pleading face of his wife, when, in the hour of his great trial, when from street to street cried the cry, "a child lost — stolen!" had never smiled, but in the agonies of his soul had wept night and day, till he could weep no more, on the brink of the grave. Frantic with the only thought that filled his brain, he walked to and fro, here and there, in the cave, calling his child, crying his child's favorite phrase, "Chip, come, come, child," and stopping, at last, he saw the wolves had left, and threw the torch down, and in the dark passed through the cave, and the dry grass, crushed under his feet, rustled like a serpent. Into the darkness, silent, save a momentary exclamation, for there were but human hearts, and human eyes, and human souls, he exclaimed

"What means this mockery? the child is not here. Come out, Indian devil, tell me if she is living or dead, and I will have you cursed spot."

A mocking laugh was the Indian's answer as she stood before him

"I told you in the letter that she was alive, and so she is; I tell you, too, that she is dead; do you believe it? Hush! don't go off mad now; gentlemen should never show temper; it may do for a savage. There, now, you are in a frenzy; how impolite! Shan't I hold your hand to steady you? Don't look at me that way, it isn't good manners. Come, let me comfort you. If you don't find one of your own blood here, you will in that little imp at the tavern. I told you you should certainly see your own child, and I have kept my word; take care of him as you would of her, and see what will come of it;" and taking a narrow, trodden path, she walked rapidly away, her laugh dying on the still air.

The hut was indeed empty; no trace of a child was any where to be seen. Baffled, enraged, the lady's father turned his face toward the descent. He was entirely ignorant of the locality, he had no note of the surroundings as he came, so that he found himself, after a little time vainly seeking a path in the thick forest at the foot of the hill.

"Why, Nick! how came you here?" he exclaimed, as the boy presented himself, in the time of his extremity, soiled and panting and pale.

"I felt 's if you'd want me," replied Nick, hanging his head at the warmth of voice and evident pleasure expressed by Le Vargn.

"You did a brave thing, boy; you are no coward; I'll repay you for this; you shall go home and live with me, and be to me as a son."

The boy's dark eyes sparkled with pleasure, for he had seen the hard lot of an outcast, from his infancy. Reared in a work-house, accustomed to daily cruelty, with no remembrance of father or mother, nothing to call out either love or tenderness, it seemed like opening the light of a new world to him to hear the voice of kindness or commendation. Carefully Le Vargn picked his way through the wood, Nick going before, until they came out where the horse still stood, impatient from his long confinement.

"Get — get up, Jeff — jog along, Pete — don't you be frightened, sissy; guess the old woman 'll give you a good bed and something nice for supper. Ain't got no teeth, have yet, sissy; [illegible] Mrs. Stockdale hain't got any work to do; [illegible] that day, [illegible]; nice little girl — how are you, Bet — [illegible] — there's the house — there's Ben [illegible] — there's the young ones. Ben, good boy, Ben! Yes — got a present for you — [illegible] you [illegible] Pete [illegible] oats, the greedy rascal. Come, little one."

[illegible] had been in the same bewildered state of mind since the [illegible] until the present moment. When she felt again the grasp of the rough but kindly hand, her little frame shook from head to foot. It was dusk, but not sufficiently deep to hide from her sight a swarm of yellow heads, each clamoring to know what dad had got.

"Git out, all of you; go into your ma and tell her I've brought another young one home, a poor little creetur I picked up by the side of the wild woods, with nary a livin' critter near her. Somebody or nuther got tired of her, I s'pose; like's not, folks is so heartless nowa-days;" and so talking, holding the trembling child against his heavy driver's coat, he entered the ample kitchen, followed by nine youngsters, clamoring, laughing, shouting, and demanding to see the queer thing dad had got.

Supper smoked on the table, and Chip, who by degrees began to be reconciled to the strange sights about her, allowed herself to be led to the well-filled board, and seated beside Bob, from whom, however, she instinctively shrank.

"I wonder if the child knows how to eat?" said Mrs. Snackskin, helping everybody; "what did you eat to home, little gal?"

"Johnny-cake," said Chip, at which they all laughed till she cowered down in her seat with fright.

"Don't you mind 'em, sissy," said the farmer, spreading a generous slice of bread with apple-sauce, and laying it on her plate; "they ain't got no manners here; was brought up with the pigs."

Chip ate with silence, casting timid glances around, the other children disposed of their food voraciously, and for hunger's sake, knowing little of and caring less for the rules of the table; and after supper, with a vigorous application of tongue and knuckles they were driven off to bed. By the flaring light of a dim candle, Chip saw a long, gloomy chamber, with heavy rafters overhead, and here and there a bed clumsily made, peeping out of the darkness. Around the walls garments hung; baskets and half-barrels stood on the uneven floor, heaps of corn lay in confusion, and a curtain, torn in strips by the mischievous hands of children, hung from the large window through whose broken panes the wind blew. Six of the children slept in this chamber, all girls, and Chip was to be crowded in with Kitty and Drony, the two youngest.

In the morning the poor little homeless and friendless waif was delirious with fever.

"It's plain to see here's a hard case on my hands, Hiram Snackskin," ejaculated his worthy dame, turning to her abstracted spouse, as, thoughtfully gazing in the fire, he replenished his pipe. "I haven't got nothing to do to-day, nothing at all; I'm a lady to dress in silks and satins and suck my fingers; yes, I haven't got to do to scour and the week's ironing to do, besides churning and cooking, and it's because I haven't got one single thing to do that this child is on my hands. Oh, dear, dear! Hiram Snackskin, you were born, I do believe, to be the particular plague of my life."

"She'll do something to earn her salt, I warrant, wife," returned the prosy Snackskin.

"Earn her salt! do you know she's up-stairs raving with a fever? How do you know but it's an infectious one, and all the children'll git it? Kitty says she hugged her close last night. I'm sure I don't know what I'm going to do."

"Going to take care of that child," said the man, stoutly; "if you won't, why, I will."

"You'll kill her, with that stuff," responded the wife.

"Let me alone for that;" and Hiram Snackskin wended his way up-stairs.

"Poor young 'un," exclaimed the benevolent Snackskin, standing at the foot of the bed and gazing compassionately on the child, "looks as if she'd got her death-warrant; poor little young un what is she talking about, you Kit?"

"She wants some drink," responded Kitty, looking very much as if she would like to get away from her charge.

"Well, she shall have it, so she shall. Lift her up, Kit, here's a nice bowlful of good strong coffee, nice and hot — drink, little gal."

Chip, in her feverish thirst, grasped the sides of the bowl with both hands, and sucked down the beverage, strong and hot as it was; then with a look of gratitude she fell back on the bed.

"Now just set and take good care of her, you Kit; tell her stories, and kinder lift her mind off of her feelings, and she'll be up by and by, fresh and hearty as ever. Don't you leave her now you hear! I'm going pretty soon with the hands, and your mother, she ain't got nothing to do, only to do every thing generally, so you must take care of the poor little gal; now mind."

He went down-stairs and out to the barn without saying any thing to his wife. Kitty, already tired of her irksome employment, crept to the window, and watched till she saw the farm-hands go off with him to the fields, then she muttered to herself that she wasn't going to wait upon a beggar, and slyly left the room.

Chip lifted her head with an effort; it burned and throbbed, and seemed to bound back and forth on the pillow with the fierce rush of blood through its arteries. She was all alone. The sunlight quivered through the narrow casement, but it did not light up the gloomy chamber with its many corners. The garments that hung against the wall moved strangely and solemnly to the child's excited fancy, and suggested the name of Mother Kurstegan; even her presence had been welcome in this dreary hour. Once or twice she attempted to rise, but a strange sickening sensation held her back, pinioned to the bed. And then she began to talk; she was in her cave-home, playing with the rude toys the Indian woman had fashioned for her — she listened to wild stories of beasts and cruel beasts conjured by the sweet voice of humanity; she lived over again the scenes of her departure from the only home she had ever known, and prattled of the beautiful objects she should soon see. Hour after hour passed on, and she still alone too, even, and the kind-hearted teamster assembled again to the little attic, and found her raving and laughing and shouting. He went down-stairs instantly, and taking Kitty, who had totally forgotten her charge, by the arm, shook her till she was red in the face; then turning to his wife, he exclaimed,

"I tell you what, old woman! you'll have the death of that poor child on your soul yet, are you a heathen to let her lay sick as a dog all alone?

"Mercy on us, Hiram Sandskin, what is the child to me? I haven't got any children of my own — nothing to do all day but watch a strange gal because she's took a little cold. I thought one of the children was there. Ain't you going to eat your dinner?"

"Dinner be hanged! Children be hanged! Bob, go and tackle up the colt; I'll have a doctor, if I have to go five miles for one, and give him five dollars beside. I tell you, Nancy, that's a sick child, and you don't got any feeling for the poor little thing — Jerusy, reach me them boots."

"I'd like to know what makes you take to the child so, Hiram Sandskin?" exclaimed the matron, with flashing eyes; "you don't over much tender of your own, any how."

"Why, bless your spermit, soul and body, woman!" ejaculated the farmer, fiercely, pausing with his left leg half way in his boot, "do I want a human critter to die under my roof like a dog, nobody a-caring to her, and she a raving with a fever? No, I don't, cheerful as I do; ready, Bob; now," he added, with a quiet tread, "you all set down and eat your dinners, comfortable, while she's a-a-a-dying, I'll see to her," and he was gone.

Mrs. Sandskin passed her hand across her eyes, but whether the tears were of pride or jealousy, it is impossible for me to tell. She could not eat, however, nor even sit down but going into the table in chamber of her eldest daughter, she crept up stairs, and entered. As she entered the little chamber, Chip was standing upon her bed, her shoes have fallen from her scrubbers, her hair is tangled, her eyes fixed upon the wall, dilated, and shining brighter than all human loveliness, while from her parched lips came the words, "Mother, mother, take me too — me too," and then, the spell broken, she sank down, cowering, shivering, and sobbing.

"She saw something," said the farmer's wife under her breath, and subdued, awe-stricken, she hurried to the bedside, and softly motherly, soothing words. But Chip heard her not; her eyes were wild and glassy, her strength was gone, her breath came short and hot.

"Dear knows what I'm to do with her," murmured Mrs. Sandskin; "I wish I had thought more about her. She's been a-a-a-thing!" and she shuddered as she thought it. "Some one," and she ended by enunciating words to calm her fears, but in vain, the child had not strength to turn or even to know.

"What if her dead mother's been a-warning of her to come to her?" suggested the matron's wife, rocking herself to and fro in her chair, "Poor child of such tempers! Come, come, if I've a-a-a-warning to give. I guess I'll cover the child and have a good cup of tea." So saying, she threw a mantle over the poor Chip and wended her way to the cheerful kitchen.

The tea was brought and finished, and Chip had fainted, because exhausted.

In the midst of the noise, the odor of cooking, and the sounds of labor, the lonely child rested with scarcely a spark of life in her meager body. Sometimes Kitty or Jenny would venture near, "to

a [illegible], and then start [illegible] back, resuming their [illegible] play. [illegible] and presently in walked the farmer and the doctor.

[illegible]

[illegible] "[illegible] singular beauty," he remarked, turning to the farmer, "whose child is she?"

"[illegible] I don't know," replied Hiram, "I found her sitting like a [illegible] by the side of the road, [illegible] I thought [illegible] her into the wagon and drove her home. She got the chills, poor thing, as the dog bit them; [illegible] I don't know — she's a nice little thing, I guess."

"She is [illegible] pretty," repeated the doctor, pressing [illegible] "and she is very sick with brain-congestion, poor little creature; poor little thing!" he ejaculated, turning with a tender [illegible] "[illegible] pretty," she said [illegible] this is no place for him.

"I'm sure I don't know where I can bring her," replied Mrs Snackskin, peevishly.

"If there was any possibility of getting her home, [illegible] hastened with rapid movement to envelop the child in [illegible] the poor [illegible] mother [illegible] to her so dreary a child.

"My dear, who do you think has been here?" asked the doctor's wife as he stepped within his own door.

"I could hardly venture to guess," replied the doctor hurriedly.

"Mr. Le Vaugn, your old Philadelphia friend," returned his wife; "I did hold [illegible] till you came, but he would not; he was very much disappointed at your absence."

"Well, wife, I'll tell you presently; will you have a little [illegible] I have brought home a patient — a sick child."

With a trembling hand, the model wife of the good doctor turned to [illegible] his words, and in another minute the sick child was brought in, in the [illegible] of Hiram Snackskin, and placed upon a soft white couch.

"Dear little angel," [illegible] the doctor's wife, "where did you find her? whose child is she? has she no mother?"

"I should say not," said Hiram, his eyes fastened to the sweet face. "I found her [illegible], ma'am, half perished, as I may say," he added — proud of his part in the transaction.

"[illegible] you'll have to burden yourself to care for her."

"It will be no burden to me, you know, doctor; but oh! how sick she is!" and [illegible] down by the little couch with the tenderness of a mother, while the doctor went out with farmer Snackskin.

"And now, dear wife, let us hear about Le Vaugn," said the doctor, after he had attended to his little patient.

"First tell me; is this a dangerous case?" asked his wife, laying her hand tenderly on the brow of the unconscious child.

"Her pulse is fearful [illegible] it was, her hands colder; we must get some [illegible]; her [illegible] feeble. Yes, it is a very dangerous case; the symptoms are [illegible]," replied the doctor, "but, perhaps with good nursing and with God's [illegible], we may bring her through."

"I never [illegible] a child," [illegible] the doctor's wife, the tears [illegible] to her eyes, "[illegible] our own little Lena."

"To tell you the truth, the [illegible] thought [illegible]," said the [illegible], "and it was that [illegible] the eyes and the cheek that instigated me to bring her here."

"[illegible]," the [illegible] [illegible] the opposite wall.

"[illegible]," he replied, [illegible] subject, he asked about Le Vaugn again.

"He was in a great hurry, [illegible]," said the lady.

"On horseback, as usual, I suppose."

"Yes, [illegible], my dear, I never [illegible] look so badly."

"Following after the [illegible] — what in the world do you mean — my dear?"

"Why, if I understood him, he had [illegible] in charge in the

[illegible] but he was [illegible] and so strange, that I could hardly make anything out of him. He seemed to me very much changed and very unhappy, and he [illegible] as if there was sickness or trouble at home.

"Poor [illegible]! he has been [illegible] the loss of his [illegible]," [illegible] the doctor; "he was [illegible] fellow, full of life, [illegible] with the exception [illegible], gay, merry, and handsome; but since his [illegible], or rather, I should say since the sad [illegible] of his child, he has been morose and unhappy."

"He [illegible] well," remarked his wife.

"Yes, and he is a man of [illegible] talents, but it seems as if the memory of some wrong clung to him."

"I don't know," mused his wife; "I rather think he is very much attached to his family."

"Undoubtedly," replied the doctor, "he idolizes his wife; but when young he was a great [illegible], and indulgence in that appetite may have led him to [illegible]. The story is not true, but I have been told, that he went through a sham marriage ceremony with a young girl of fashion, and left with her a [illegible], and then deserted her. I do not know how true this is, I regret, I only heard of it lately.

"And do you think the injured girl stole the child?" asked his wife.

"What [illegible]!" exclaimed the doctor, laughing in his wife's flushed cheek; "why, I hadn't thought of that — probably some emissary of hers if not herself; I shouldn't wonder."

"Sad [illegible]," exclaimed the doctor's wife, drawing a long breath; "see our little patient is stirring, the fever is coming on," she added, turning to the cradle; "dear [illegible]! who can tell your story?"

CHAPTER VI.

LE VAUGN RETURNS TO A DESOLATE HOME.

It was a beautiful morning in the middle of September on which Le Vaugn, [illegible], took the stage to his native [illegible].

He [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] of concern in the face of the passer-by [illegible], would have been [illegible] to know, as he walked [illegible]. He would have seen him [illegible] that a [illegible] passed by, [illegible] his basket on the [illegible] to look, and one and another, from some shop door, [illegible] would be passed, and nodding [illegible], and [illegible] broken off [illegible] to

talk of him. But he noticed none of these things as he rushed toward his own residence. An unwonted solemnity fell upon him as he turned into the spacious street, lined with noble houses, and drew near to the marble steps of his own house. [illegible] he checked his horse, sat bolt upright, and gazed on the [illegible] before him with [illegible]. A broad band of black crape crossed from the [illegible] to the hinge; and the [illegible] on the [illegible] of crape, suspended from every closed window. A [illegible] as if the hand of death were knocking at his heart, crept through Le [illegible]'s frame; his strength deserted him, and he staggered as he dismounted. An old black servant, grey with many years, and bent with [illegible] infirmities, came up that moment from the [illegible] passage that led to the rear of the house. Seeing his master, he paused at the [illegible], bowed, came forward a little, but seemed [illegible] to speak.

"Well, [illegible], say on quick; here is bad news for me; what of my wife?"

"S'pose I go first and tell Marthy to open the do' for you, sir?" said the old man, respectfully, stepping back again, still [illegible] to answer, while his lips trembled as his eye watched the blanched face before him.

As if there were relief in uncertainty, Le [illegible] yielded, and moved with dragging steps up the bright entrance. Presently the door was opened by a tidy servant, who stood with her apron to her eyes, sobbing at sight of the master of the house.

"When did she die?" he said, bracing himself firmly, as if to prepare for this sudden and unlooked-for misfortune — the [illegible] and the solemn stillness of the house told him that he was no longer a husband.

"Two days ago, sir, and we've been looking for you so anxiously," said the girl.

Le [illegible] waved his hand impatiently, as if to check her, and turned to a neighbor who was just coming down the stairs, who greeted him with a quiet manner and a [illegible] voice, and then, without further word or question, preceded him up-stairs, opened the door of a chamber, and as he entered shut it upon him with tender, womanly thoughtfulness. He was alone with the dead!

It was a sumptuous chamber, lofty and spacious, the walls [illegible] in panels, the ceiling elaborately [illegible], and from the central [illegible] hung a glittering chandelier. [illegible], the paintings were covered with crape; the blinds, nearly closed, let in a pale grey light over the carpet [illegible] the windows seemed [illegible] and [illegible]. [illegible] breathing [illegible] was so [illegible] the room, [illegible] breath, nor [illegible] Le [illegible] stood [illegible], straining into [illegible]. [illegible] on the mantel, his gift to her in the first days of their prosperity

ticked with a sad and lonely sound, as if it were measuring over again the slow beating of her dying pulse. What with the anxiety and disappointment connected with the search for his child, and the [illegible] upon the death of his wife, Mr. Le Vernon was nearly [illegible]. He [illegible] with the [illegible] against the heart, [illegible] eyes could not [illegible]; and he almost [illegible]. He threw himself upon the lounge on which she [illegible] had been wont to rest, and groaned in his terrible distress, and [illegible] with dry, burning eyes, till the first sharp grief was over. Then he [illegible] up [illegible], returned to the bed, and [illegible] with [illegible] head turned down the upper portion of the coverlet. The dead wife lay before him in her [illegible] beauty. The soft hair [illegible] as [illegible], but death had closed her [illegible] eyes and [illegible] her [illegible]. Brow, lip, and cheek were [illegible] with a waxen whiteness; her hands were folded with a [illegible], on her softly rounded bosom; she was dressed for the grave — ready for the coffin. He bent and kissed her, then shivering at the chill of the unanswering lips, he turned away in the extremest anguish, and resting his head on his clasped hands, sat at the window and moaned her name, as if he were calling her back to him.

Meanwhile the servant had again been summoned to the door. A well-dressed man stood holding a bright faced but [illegible]-looking boy by the hand.

"This is Mr. Le Vernon's I suppose," said the man, urging the boy within by drawing him forward.

"Yes, sir; but the master is in trouble, and wouldn't wish to see anybody; he's just lost his wife."

"Well, I don't know; he brought this boy to me early this morning, before I had opened my store in fact, and said, says he, 'Brown' — I am his tailor — 'fit this boy with a decent suit of clothes, and as soon as he's ready take him home to my house;' which I did, according to the letter of the law — and here he is, regularly fitted out; new hat, new clothes, new boots, shiny buttons, and here's the bill."

"Well, I'm sure — I — I don't know, sir. I must tell master, Mr. Le Vernon, sir, [illegible] I [illegible], and I [illegible] [illegible]," [illegible].

"Never mind, never mind [illegible]," answered Mr. Brown; "[illegible] this boy [illegible]; [illegible]

[illegible] Mr. Le Vernon, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] he realize another's sorrow?

[illegible] know what to do with him, for a moment. Nick stood [illegible] his new clothes, first

eyeing himself and then Martha, and casting sly glances round the spacious hall, one foot turned over the other.

"I guess I'm very comfortable [illegible] the kitchen with me for a little while, till Mr. Le Vargn comes downstairs," said Martha, [illegible] Nick, [illegible], [illegible] very high.

"Sit down here," said Martha, as she ushered him into a [illegible] apartment, with shining floor and wainscot, and quantities of bright utensils hung in conspicuous places.

Nick seated himself in a large chair, wondering what made the lady so gracious to him, who had received nothing [illegible] remember but kicks and cuffs, and coarse commands [illegible] threats and menaces. Nothing looked familiar to him, [illegible] large clock that stood in one corner, standing in [illegible] had stood for three generations, and [illegible] it and marched out of the old man's kitchen, and [illegible] before him. The cook, an old German woman, was just [illegible] as she came in; she peered over her spectacles, [illegible] put them on again, and started slowly out of the [illegible] own particular premises, casting glances at Nick as she went.

"[illegible] to stay here, little [illegible]?" said Martha, taking her sewing, and seating herself beside him.

"I guess I am," replied Nick, timidly; and then gathering courage, he added, "I like this house."

"Yes, it's a fine house, but there ain't never been much happiness in it, I guess," replied Martha, talking to herself rather than to him; "at any rate, it's a sorrowful house now the poor lady [illegible] has gone to heaven, I hope. She died broken-hearted [illegible] death for that stolen child. What is your name, little boy?"

"My name is Nick; but Mr Le Vargn, he says, I'm to be called Master Henry Le Vargn; he's going to adopt me," he added, [illegible], pushing back his new blue jacket, and parting the [illegible] from his forehead.

"Going to adopt you. Well, I never! What in the world is he going to do with you, a little white-faced [illegible]. Why, child, you don't know, [illegible] you know, that [illegible] going cold up-stairs, poor lady!"

"[illegible] 'cause I come away. Misty was good, though," he added.

"[illegible] Le Vargn, [illegible] Martha, [illegible] vacancy.

It was very still there. Only the [illegible] fell faintly on the ear, and the tick [illegible]

[illegible] Nick felt a sensation of [illegible] over him from head to foot, [illegible], watching Martha as she mused.

[illegible]

[illegible] times why she heard no signs of life up-stairs

[illegible] who were his only living relatives in America, entered the kitchen.

“Who is this little boy, Martha?” asked Celeste.

“[illegible] Celeste, and accordin' to what he says, he will stay here,” replied Martha.

“[illegible] I suppose,” said the girl, [illegible]: “I wonder if he knows about the city. Can you go to John Lake's straw-shop for me, little fellow?”

“He never was in the city before — he don't know nothing about Philadelphia,” replied Martha; “if you'll wait till I set the table, I'll go for you.”

“Oh, that's a kind creature, Martha, I'm sure; if you'll just ask [illegible], you know, [illegible], and if she'll send it with her [illegible], I'll be ever so much obliged to you,” and Celeste left the kitchen.

“If you'd like to go with me, little boy, you may,” said Martha, as she stood shawled and bonneted, after getting all things in readiness for the dinner to be served up.

Nick assented with boyish [illegible], and the two wended their way into the streets. To the boy's eyes, [illegible], every object was a wonder; [illegible]

[illegible] led from a side door into a lofty well ventilated apartment, at [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] cap, differing only from Quaker simplicity by the addition of a [illegible] frill, a low, broad forehead, over which was passed a [illegible] band, underneath which a narrow edge of silvery hair was [illegible]. Mrs. Swan was a remarkable woman. Her face was [illegible] fair almost as youth; her lips, which were compressed con-[illegible] and her eyes, which were [illegible] and [illegible]; a [illegible] yet lined her cheeks, and her low forehead showed [illegible] [illegible] very attractive [illegible] was an embodiment of womanly dignity. Her hands [illegible] [illegible] of the world. A [illegible] or purity seemed to [illegible] her — her calm, deep, dark eyes, remarkable only for a concentration of light, that poured as it passed through the cold and [illegible] [illegible] into the hidden spirit of the [illegible], made one, in her presence, [illegible] in spite of himself. It seemed as if she were guarded and [illegible] about from all contaminating influence. The young boy [illegible] stopped near her as if she were a present, and came to her with all their strangeness, some of the sympathy of her great, strong, and loving heart. And it was not strange, under her eye as they had many of them been for several years, that they were all quiet, thoughtful, and modest in manner and speech. The [illegible] of John Lobe was a fine example of [illegible], and the poor [illegible] [illegible] place one of her favorites under the supervision of Mrs. Swan, but that she was, by nature, so [illegible], so [illegible] that the [illegible] in great awe. Martha, who [illegible] the [illegible] woman, went immediately up to the little table, and [illegible] and put in hand, Mrs. Swan seemed to have been [illegible], and lowered her [illegible], still holding Nick by the hand. Nick, by the way, was [illegible] a little down [illegible]. His [illegible], round eyes, [illegible] with a [illegible] of [illegible] that set the [illegible] [illegible] to laughing, and he, nowise discomfited, laughed back [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] at the [illegible] time [illegible] him. Mrs. Swan, rising to attend to the order, perceived the boy, and paused [illegible] a [illegible] look of inquiry toward Martha.

"[illegible] belong to me, ma'am, [illegible] Martha, drawing a [illegible] to her side, and [illegible] to Mrs. Swan.

[illegible] regarded him [illegible] and [illegible], then with a [illegible] [illegible], and, after a moment's [illegible], [illegible] Martha's hand, with a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to be made.

"[illegible] Martha, [illegible] to be [illegible], but [illegible] [illegible]. "[illegible], my little fellow?" he added, taking Nick by the hand.

"Yes, sir, [illegible]," replied Martha, "only this is making; indeed, sir, it was a hard blow for the poor man."

The [illegible] [illegible] little [illegible]; an [illegible] flash was in her [illegible], [illegible] in her eyes, and then she

was as calm as ever. The flush faded, her eyes were intent upon her work; Marion and the old Quaker, still talking, moved slowly toward the door. A pretty girl came up to the forewoman with a quantity of [illegible] straws. Mrs. Smith examined them minutely, while the girl chatted.

"[illegible] you think that was a handsome little fellow that was here just now?" she said.

"He was a fine, bright boy," replied the forewoman.

"I noticed his eyes particularly, because they were so exactly the color of yours. I never saw any one before that had your eyes."

"Mary!" exclaimed Mrs. Smith, in a faint but deprecating voice, and her cheek had grown deadly pale. Commanding herself a moment after, she added, calmly, "take your work again, my child."

The girl lingered, with a troubled look.

"Have I offended you?" she asked timidly.

"No," replied the forewoman, "you never offended me in your life, my dear."

Her voice was very calm and soft, but the folds of her drab dress, and the gauze of her neckhandkerchief rose and fell, as if deep feeling was [illegible] that apparently passionless heart. The girl [illegible] — the buzz and hum of the work-room, the rustling of straw, the clicking of sharp [illegible], the [illegible] of fluttering ribbons went on, and the stately forewoman sat, one hand occupied with a pen, which [illegible] on the paper before her, the other [illegible] her cheek. All that day she was thoughtful, pale, and silent — the girls wondered at her mood.

Home again, Marion gave Nick a book of pictures, and helped the German cook dish up the dinner.

"Oh, dear! I wish anybody could get any reason into uncle," cried Celeste, [illegible] into the dining-room, where the rest of the family followed her slowly. "He's up in the picture gallery, walking, [illegible], and his face and eyes look [illegible]; I [illegible] to [illegible]; he won't speak to anybody, he won't let anybody come near him, he's refused his [illegible]; he'll just go crazy, I know he will — perhaps just like it — and then he'll kill us all, [illegible]."

"If [illegible], Miss Celeste," said Marion, calmly, "I [illegible] it isn't much I can say, but perhaps it may make him feel better."

[illegible] slowly, with eyes half closed, and [illegible] she had never [illegible] in [illegible]. [illegible] Marion [illegible]. All [illegible], and [illegible] his [illegible] grown gray and [illegible]; he [illegible], or, if he knew, to care.

"She was very happy when she died, sir."

He started as if stung, as he exclaimed, "Happy! who?"

"Because she was a Christian," said Martha in a low voice. "She became very happy at the last. God was merciful, sir."

"You speak [illegible] to me — a Christian! What had she to [illegible] Christian for? because God took away her [illegible], her [illegible], her happiness, her life?"

"We have no right to question God," said Martha, meekly.

"I wish I felt so," said Le Vaugn, bitterly.

"I wish you did feel so," replied Martha, low and sadly; "perhaps it would be better if I said, I wish you may," [illegible].

[illegible] with himself, he repressed it, and with [illegible] effort [illegible] to Martha, and said, in tones so hollow that she trembled [illegible], "They say that you were with her; sit down, and tell me all about it, from the first to the last."

Martha sat down, [illegible] for a moment as she clasped and unclasped her fingers, and then began, with [illegible] voice: "She took the [illegible]. All that day she didn't get up. [illegible]; he couldn't account for the change that had [illegible]; and she [illegible] she was, and then, so, I think, [illegible]. That night I watched with her. She was [illegible], and talked a great deal with me; she talked [illegible] about you, and about her lost child, and every thing. She said she didn't think she should ever see you in this world again." Martha's voice [illegible] her for a moment, and her eyes [illegible] drops of grief.

"Well, sir," continued Martha, [illegible] her voice, "I shall never forget that night — [illegible] — nor the next day — for she was sweet, and [illegible], and patient as a saint. Once she called me and said 'I [illegible];' that was the night, you know — and says she, 'don't you see [illegible]? Isn't the Lord good to comfort me so?' Well, she fell into a little doze after that, and as I [illegible] over her, her eyes opened suddenly, and they shone so brightly, I was frightened; and, oh, sir! what do you think she exclaimed? 'I —' the good creature, overcome by her feelings, paused to [illegible] — and then in a [illegible], [illegible] 'I [illegible], Martha!' [illegible] 'I [illegible], Martha — I [illegible] — I [illegible] feel. [illegible]!' [illegible] — I [illegible] that, [illegible] and [illegible], 'it [illegible].' '[illegible], Martha!' says she, [illegible], 'God gave me power

[illegible] her; it wasn't my fault,' said she, 'I saw her and knew her — and she saw me, and knew me, and cried out to me to me — but at that moment I was back again with you, Martha.' 'And was she well, and in good health?' I asked — for I could not help feeling that [illegible] we knew it [illegible] — but she only grieved a little, and wouldn't answer me. Oh! I made me feel so.'' — and Martha [illegible] a wild cry, and sobbed for a moment uncontrollably. 'I [illegible], sir,'' she said, afterward, wiping her eyes hastily with her apron — "but you told me to tell you all."

"Go on."

[illegible] — so hollow and sepulchral.

'Well, sir, I saw she was [illegible], and I asked her if she had any [illegible] to send for you, and she said, 'My love, tell my earthly love — [illegible] I loved him to the last; tell him I will love him in heaven.'"

"[illegible]," he cried, breaking into tears, "oh, my wife — my wife!" and he sunk as only he who knows at wholesome weeps when tears will no longer be repressed.

"It was far in the afternoon that she died, sir. Our neighbor was [illegible] old, [illegible], and the rest were standing about the bed. 'Mother!' said she, and she gave one look out of those dying eyes, [illegible] — 'I will!' said I, as well as I could for crying, for I thought my heart would break to hear her; and then she said again, 'Remember!' I got close to her bed, for I knew she was going as [illegible] — I [illegible] — [illegible] — [illegible]. That is all, sir."

[illegible] As she spoke the last, it seemed, as of [illegible], she fell on the bed. Jean, the maid, was striving to [illegible] the sounds of some person outside. Martha stepped to the door. A woman in dark visage, [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] with one hand, [illegible] that she [illegible] would enter; and, with a vigorous movement, she thrust herself within.

"I want to see the lady, if I can't see the master," she said, [illegible] and pushed her sun-bleached hair farther under her bonnet.

"[illegible]," said Le Vengeur, "do you come to [illegible] [illegible]? Yes, perhaps — to see where you have to lie here."

[illegible], the Indian woman [illegible] up her [illegible], and [illegible] where lay the corpse. [illegible] of her [illegible], she turned to Le Vengeur, as she said with [illegible] voice and hand outstretched,

"I [illegible] Wednesday, [illegible], and [illegible] more, [illegible]. You [illegible] [illegible]. I [illegible] — But what [illegible]? Would [illegible] I [illegible] your [illegible]? [illegible] you [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in the sight of his

almost writhing in agony with greedy eye. Wasn't my child [illegible], Le Vergne? Didn't she touch and excite [illegible] most of admiration, at the free glasses? Did you ever see [illegible] any tribe whose chiefs didn't burn it you but [illegible] sneer me — let the bottom tried forget her virtue till you [illegible] were had taught her to shun the [illegible] who had [illegible] her care and love? Sather! — sather! [illegible] well-bound — night prowler — there! you wouldn't [illegible] to come and put me out — if I had a [illegible] I could [illegible] only the wiser; but I tell you, the Great Spirit [illegible] wrongs of my white swan — if He don't, I will."

She looked about at the [illegible] of the room — the proud lung at the motionless form of the [illegible] — she [illegible] with a bitter smile toward the [illegible] prostrate Le Vergne — [illegible] left the chamber and the house.

The funeral ceremonies were celebrated with great pomp — the body of the fair and gentle wife was laid in Le Vergne's [illegible], and the stricken man returned to his silent home, [illegible] in sorrow. He sat [illegible], as he had sat all day, with the exception of the time taken in going to the graveyard. A [illegible] hour found him, and Martha entered, bringing Nick with her.

"Thank you, Martha, I had [illegible] him entirely," said as he looked upon the boy's bright young face, a [illegible] seemed to strike him; he sighed [illegible] — [illegible] Martha to go out, and after she had gone, leaned his head on his hand, taking no further notice of the child, who [illegible] up on a low seat, and sat in his old [illegible] by the [illegible], till Le Vergne, worn out with his gloomy thoughts, [illegible] taking Nick with him.

CHAPTER VII.

PARK DINSMORE AND VAN ALSTYNE MEET MOLLY KINGSLEY — MORE CONCERNING CHIP.

Van Alstyne and Park Dinsmore [illegible] in the city at the same time with Le Vergne, and [illegible], [illegible] hand, to the presents of the past [illegible], [illegible] Wagner, Gray, the [illegible] of the [illegible], talking [illegible] about him, and [illegible] as a pair of [illegible] spectators of all the [illegible]. They [illegible] the old tavern [illegible], by [illegible] and white [illegible], his light neckcloth and superannuated broadcloth.

"I say, Gray, [illegible] — [illegible] mother, and [illegible]"

At this Park said before the slow old man had time to utter a word, and while helping Van Alstyne to his place, also he passed in himself, and struck the leader heavily but respectfully on the shoulder. By this time the latter had recovered his faculties sufficiently to reply to his queries, and the horses dashed through the noisy streets, coming soon to the road leading into the open country. Beguiling the time by pleasant chat, and a vigorous enjoyment of the Autumn scenery, expressed by exuberant language, and a free, joyous laughter, the carriage in an hour rolled along by the beautiful Wissahickon, and soon drew up before a stately mansion on the outskirts of Germantown. An avenue, lined by magnificent chestnut-trees, led to a smooth, level lawn, dotted with noble trees.

Not far from the house the bold heights of surrounding hills, crowded thickly with hemlock, spruce, and cedar, rose with quiet majesty, while beeches and pines covered the lesser slopes. The calm of a clear sky hung over all, and the great house looked almost solemn in the silence, surrounded as it was with heavily foliaged trees. Quiet brooded on the bosom of the noisy silver stream; hushed rested the dewy lowlands, and on the sunlit sun-spotted hills and fields and cottage homes.

Ascending wide, massive oval steps of brown stone, the youth and his maturer friend entered the great door.

"This is my mother, Mr. Van Alstyne — a friend, mother, who has been traveling with me."

"You are very welcome," said the sweet-voiced, graceful lady, extending from her son's embrace with one white, outstretched hand to the professor.

"Now, Van Alstyne, come right up to my room; ah, I see your spectacles are longing already over these curious things — mother, you can't think what a learned hunter, specimen-seeking creature he is!"

"My son, be respectful — he's a wild boy, Mr. Van Alstyne," she added, while a mother's pride shone in her eye.

The hall was very large, old-fashioned, and modestly furnished. The lights above and at the sides of the door were nicely stained. Heavy pictures hung in the lower section, cases of birds and stuffed animals were ranged at different points. The staircase was broad, massive, and supported with a balustrade elaborately carved, the upper part of the hall was finished into galleries, ornamented with many pictures and frames, and surrounded with beautiful latticework, that could allow from the gorgeously stained glass window w[illegible] the [illegible]. From the gallery several rooms opened, and between one of these, small and richly furnished, Professor Van Alstyne was ushered by Park.

"Now, I will leave you till you are through with your toilet," said the latter, "*au revoir.*"

"By the way, [illegible] at a little of [illegible] six [illegible] [illegible], suppose we [illegible] and [illegible] time, it will be worth our while."

It wanted yet two hours of twilight. The atmosphere, dry and clear, braced their nerves with its exhilarating tone, and a [illegible] wind ruffled the bosom of the Wissahiccon. For a while the road led along the banks of the stream, keeping the [illegible] in view from the opposite side. Then from this path they [illegible] to long village-streets, now winding around the base of a [illegible] height, now down a narrow lane, and soon entering a [illegible], continued through till they came to a spot of clearing, where without [illegible], stalls, rags and ashes gave tokens of degraded human life.

"Upon my word they are all gone," excluimed Park, with an appearance of chagrin; "there's where the tents were," he continued, pointing to different localities; "it's too bad, really; we've had our ride for nothing."

"Look here to the right, Dinsmore," said Van Alstyne, "do you see a smoke — there between these trees?"

Not far from them the ground sloped into a small hollow filled with bushes, and interspersed with young trees. From the center of this a smoke was ascending in thick wreaths. Moving cautiously towards the place, Park looked down, and returning half way, for Van Alstyne had followed him, he whispered —

"It is old Mother Kettrican, as sure as you live; she has just cooked a dinner, and now sits enjoying the [illegible] grandeur. Would you venture to invade her domestic sanctum?"

"Yes," returned Van Alstyne, "provided you will lay her out. What a strange form her mind takes — so always [illegible] laying some one with remorseless cruelty."

"Good lay, mother," said Park, [illegible] forcing his way through the tangled undergrowth, "we came to pay a little friendly call with the Indians, but find them gone."

"Gone — gone, truly, truly, gone — [illegible] — forever!" [illegible], leaning against the dry stalk of [illegible], and slowly rocking to and fro. "I say," continued she, "[illegible] in your wanderings? I thought, you know, that perhaps you might have found me, starved to death, [illegible]; I always thought, as such things do occur sometimes — a small child with blue eyes and light hair," she added, with a [illegible], as she looked from one face to the other, "a delicate child that hasn't been used to hardship, but been, oh! so tenderly, so tenderly brought up! Light as the thistle-down, she was — I think if you gentlemen had lifted her, you wouldn't have known that you had any thing in your arms at all."

"What child was it?" Park [illegible].

The black eyes [illegible] to him; then folding her arms, she said, stolidly —

"That's none of your business! I saw such a child, and how such a child, and have [illegible] — " She paused to control herself, then added — "I [illegible] our Indians — gone [illegible] West [illegible]," and she commenced singing in a plaintive tone:

"Dead and buried,
Ocharoke,
Under leaves
Of pine and oak!
Winds shall lull thee,
Rivers run by thee,
Birds fly over thee,
Grass grow above thee;
Flowers at the head,
Arrows at the foot,
Water for drink,
For meat the root—
Dead and buried,
Ocharoke,
Under leaves
Of pine and oak."

She hastened away, leaving the youth and the young professor thoughtful and quiet.

"Do you see how the weather has changed?" asked Van Alstyne, suddenly, pointing to the sky.

"Run, run, as fast as you can, as sure as you live; Mother Kerstman, they say, [illegible]; for wherever she goes it rains!" cried Park, as the two remounted their horses.

"She is an adept student of the weather-signs, I suppose," replied Van Alstyne; "you remember I predicted rain this morn; I wonder I forgot it; [illegible], or we shall get wet to the skin."

[illegible] gave them no time to discuss it before they reached home, but [illegible], with [illegible] exclamations for their wet state, Park and [illegible] enjoyed [illegible] the wind and the unbroken heat of the heavy [illegible] by earth. They had not long sat [illegible] to Mrs. [illegible] [illegible] song, [illegible] Park's entreaty, when the door [illegible], and Gray, the butler, entered, and said, as the [illegible], that the old [illegible] was lying out in the storm, [illegible] the house, and [illegible] his master said some one to conduct her to a shelter.

"Certainly, Gray; [illegible] immediately; wherever it is, she must not stay [illegible]," said Mrs. [illegible], rising as she spoke, and [illegible] requested.

In a few minutes he was [illegible] with a girl's figure leaning on his arm.

"Poor thing! she looks exhausted," said Mrs. [illegible], pitifully, "and her clothes have been [illegible]. I shall have her [illegible] at right a bed; Park, take your [illegible] the [illegible]."

While the two were passing out, the [illegible] the hall, supporting his [illegible], was [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible]. As he [illegible] Van Alstyne, [illegible] on the [illegible] her wet [illegible], he [illegible] the long curling [illegible] of dark hair [illegible], and [illegible] was assisted into the sitting-room, she fainted away.

Van Alstyne [illegible] away; his mind was [illegible]. Why was this young

girl, his pupil, wandering away so far from her [illegible] had ever been a mystery surrounding her. Young, [illegible], and alone; fresh and marvelous in her beauty, yet [illegible] society, though capable of being its ornament; [illegible] them with wonderful ease.

At the suggestion of Mrs. Dinsmore [illegible] sick, [illegible] and, she thought, [illegible] cations to her mother were heart-rending, adding —

"I wish I could get some clue to her name or family."

"I think I could [illegible] you," said Van Alstyne, [illegible] pose to [illegible] people [illegible] perhaps you know him."

Mrs. Dinsmore signified that she did, and would send Gray with a message to him in the morning.

"I shall be happy to serve you," said Van Alstyne, "as I go home to-morrow."

"Not so soon, I hope," said Mrs. Dinsmore.

"My dear madam, [illegible] I [illegible] Van Alstyne.

[illegible] Mrs. Dinsmore was [illegible] the pane, though the shower was subsiding.

[illegible]

[illegible] her tearful eyes; she was very happy, very thankful.

[illegible] that proffered it, and faintly smiled.

[illegible] with her great, expressive eyes.

[illegible]

"My little girl does not want to go back to her home in the cave, does she?" asked the doctor's wife, one day, kissing her affectionately.

Chip shook her head, but her eyes, now [illegible], were filled with tears.

"You love me, don't you, Lena?" asked Mrs. Angell again, as the child had her head on her [illegible]. An affirmative nod was the only answer, except that the little girl clung closer to her friend.

"Then what makes you so sad and silent, my child?"

"I don't know," was the mournful reply.

Solitude and austerity, combined with a system of intellectual torture, had almost done their work in the case of this poor child. Her imagination had grown morbid, her affections constricted, her manners irresolute. She had little childish love of pleasure; naturally, her mind had been nervous and vigorous, the child perceptive. But, thwarted and disorted, it had fallen [illegible] to the level of a merely infantile capacity, and with the faculties of three years she had scarcely the endowments possessed usually by children of seven.

But the mind was there; Master Kunstegrin's well transcribed poetic delineations, terrible as they sometimes were, had yet fallen upon rich soil. The old woman had taught her to read, by means of letters made on birch bark, and in a rude way, to draw, also. So the doctor's wife was puzzled to know by what process to call out the instincts, the natural traits of this child. Toys did not interest her — conversation wearied her — but the measured rhythm of poetry and music set her eyes sparkling, and pictures delighted her. Through these two mediums the teacher was enabled to develope the resources of her new pupil's unknown intellect. With these keys she would unlock the imprisoned mind, and produce fine jewels there worthy a glorious setting. Much depended on the manner of imparting instruction, and the society of other children. She must be accustomed to the childish company; her tastes and casual preferences must be skillfully studied, in order to aid in her development.

Established in their city home, the training was put in [illegible]. Masters were procured who were competent to invest the [illegible] ing talent, if but the germ were there. Nor did the teacher fail of a result that far surpassed the expectations of the good doctor and his wife. The pale, timid little child grew blooming and [illegible]. Her body expanded as her mind day by day [illegible]. Soon she began to display genius; erratic at first — [illegible] — [illegible] ness. It was evident that a vein of wealth had been hidden in the neglected soil — and by the use of [illegible] it began to gather here and there beneath the surface. Her voice was like a lute.

"She will astonish us, some day," said her [illegible] Mrs. Angell; "I never saw such an original."

[illegible] of the fact. It would take [illegible] the health and death of her mind's existence. The doctor and his

wife were satisfied that God had given them so wonderful a mind to develope. Every day some new and brilliant gift became apparent. What would she be? — a poet, painter, or singer? Already, when by herself, she improvised unusual airs. If she saw a striking picture or an engraving, she would often say —

"I feel as if *I* made that," and then, with a solemn voice and look, she would add, "may-be I *shall* do something like that, some day."

The recitation of a poem would fill her with strange rapture. Her deep eyes grew luminous; her breath was suspended; her cheek paled and flushed till often the book was laid by from the very pain of sympathy, and she would sit long afterwards, perhaps to tired and exhausted. Gradually the memory of her earlier life grew less vivid, but she often sprang, sobbing, from her sleep, and then it required great tenderness and tact to soothe her.

But let me take my reader back to the time of the burial of Le Vaugn's wife.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRIEND REBECCA COMFORTS LEOLINE.

"Can I walk there in three hours?"

[illegible] occupant of the old Hautz house, on Arch street, as she sat with folded hands and drooping head before the little grate. Outside, upon Lancaster street, [illegible] quivering circlet light [illegible] the dar, [illegible], and the red hale of the little fire, threw [illegible] crimson fold in her face. It was hardly cold enough for a fire, but the room was [illegible] and large, and would have seemed [illegible] without it. The occupant appeared to be a young girl of [illegible] years, but in reality she was already past twenty-four. [illegible] modestly, in a gray garb that encircled her slender throat [illegible] of which were [illegible] and fastened at the waist. [illegible] hair [illegible] from her forehead, and [illegible] [illegible] a wavy twist like a [illegible]; the woman, [illegible] of great grace of attitude, was entirely prepossessing. [illegible] [illegible] and the thoughtful eye to tell, that young as she was, she had yet [illegible] sorrow. The very repose of her features, the subdued manner, the lips that never smiled, were suggestive indications. The little piano was closed, and had not seemed to have been opened for several days. The books on the table drawn to the center of the room, were shut. Scattered upon the table of a great, [illegible] book, lay the manuscript sermons of John Lade, the Quaker preacher.

"Can I walk there in three hours?" she murmured, evidently

calculating the distance to some place outside the city limits — and then she added, "I will go to-morrow."

There was a little tap on the door.

"Come in," she said, just loudly enough to be heard, and then starting, exclaimed, "wait, I had forgotten."

Taking a key from her pocket, she came toward the door and opened it. A tall figure in a drab cloak, the hood of which was drawn over her head, entered, and depositing a little lantern on the nearest chair, laid both hands on the brow of the younger, and drawing her forehead toward her, imprinted a kiss upon it.

"Brother hath been telling me of thy despicable to-day," said the Quaker-sister, seating herself, and the young lady heaped a free flow of tears, and the rose and pink yet lived; then smoothing back her soft light hair, and tucking it carelessly under her cambric cap, she added, "he told me at our tea, I had better call and see thee, for he feared some harm had happened to thee."

"Oh! Rebecca, I am very unhappy, very miserable, very wretched," said the young woman, with quivering lip.

"If thee has no new trouble, thee is grieving the Spirit, dear child," said the Quaker tenderly.

"But I have a new trouble, friend Rebecca," said the young woman, "or rather the old one has come up afresh — oh!" and she began to wipe the tears that streamed down her cheeks.

"Does, then, the [illegible] of thy heart? " asked the Quaker, [illegible] with a shade of reproof in her voice.

"No, no, I had nothing to do [illegible] in this [illegible], in the [illegible] of affection. Mr. Le Vanoy [illegible] in my [illegible]; I had forgotten him — I hate him," she added, in a lower tone. "But, oh! Rebecca, I have [illegible] my poor mother, and I cannot rest nor sleep till I see her, and make the more atonement to obtain her forgiveness!"

"How did thee hear?"

"Casually, through one of the slop-girls. I knew my poor mother by her lover's [illegible]: she has gone to Germantown, where there is an establishment of Indians, to find — his child," she [illegible] as she spoke. "They knew nothing of it of course, but I [illegible] that the little girl has an [illegible] slipped out of an house, and she is searching for her. At any rate, she suspected [illegible] was [illegible] [illegible] stolen; it has grown [illegible] to a crazy freak. I may make [illegible] over her [illegible], her dress, [illegible] knowing how every word [illegible] to the heart. Rebecca, I must start to-morrow, and find my mother!"

"It is too delicate to work so far," said the Quaker, shaking her head, [illegible]. "Thee had better let me speak to [illegible], and —"

"Oh, no, no!" cried the young woman, breaking in upon her "Don't tell him; pray don't; [illegible] to me. I must go alone, even though it [illegible] upon my being left to act in my own way, and [illegible] my own impressions."

"[illegible] perfect liberty," said the Quaker mildly, "I only thought of thy so [illegible] strength; thee has not made thyself strong in all these years."

"[illegible], dear friend!" exclaimed the young woman, almost passionately; and falling at her feet, she covered her face in the folds of her dress.

"Humiliate not thyself, my child," said the Quaker, striving to lift her.

"Let me be here in the dust, at the feet of one so pure and good," sobbed the girl, as she clung to her knees, "whose greatest purity and goodness have been displayed in her treatment of the erring and unfortunate."

"Child, child, thou should'st not," said the Quakeress, greatly agitated, while a tear stood in her eye; "remember, we are all poor frail creatures, and if other, more at the better, having conquered through grace. Arise."

"No, let me stay here! I feel humble and hopeful, just as I am, in my [illegible] before God and you! Thank you! your hand feels so soft and [illegible] hand! — oh, if my mother would [illegible] me as my own mother, who has cast me off!"

"Poor, poor," said the Quakeress, in low and tremulous tones.

"She was [illegible] to me," sobbed the young woman, still holding her face; "I think more and more of it, how good she was, and [illegible], so [illegible] of duty, so [illegible] in her principles — oh, that I had been like her!"

"Thee was cruelly deceived, poor child!"

"Y[illegible] that I have told you?"

"[illegible] I heard, my poor [illegible]?"

"[illegible] of a [illegible], and I thought I [illegible]. My grandfather was a [illegible], a king, and as [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible], consisted of a [illegible] room, if only I had [illegible] to that [illegible], [illegible] had he [illegible] — [illegible], or poor [illegible] little child, [illegible] — [illegible], was [illegible] — [illegible] my own mother — I know it — her brain was [illegible] by my [illegible], and [illegible] in the [illegible] — [illegible] because [illegible] was [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] though [illegible], and [illegible], suffers more than I!"

"[illegible]"

"[illegible]"

"[illegible]"

"[illegible]"

"[illegible]" said the Quakeress, rising as she spoke.

"[illegible]?" [illegible]

the fire, that he had gone away from the city, and might not yet be returned.

"He is a comely young man," said Rebecca, quietly, "and he is returned, for brother came with him but yesterday morning — because wouldst thou love him if he loved thee?"

The question was abruptly put; the young woman started, and the blood receded, leaving her paler than before. She stood for a moment, irresolute, her lips apart, then suddenly covering her eyes with both hands, she dropped her head, exclaiming, in an anguished voice:

"Don't ask me! don't ask me!"

Rebecca stood in the dim light, a sad smile resting on her lips, and her figure seeming unnaturally tall in the gloom. The room was quite silent, the fire-light threw uneven shadows over the spectral walls, and made the girl's figure look wavering as she stood there in confusion and distress.

"Thee should not be afraid to love him," said Rebecca, lifting her lantern to go, "thee is as good as he — be happy my child; I wish thee a good night."

Moved by an impulse of tenderness, the lonely girl came forward, and throwing her arms over the neck of the Quakeress kissed her on either cheek.

"God bless thee, my child," said Rebecca, fervently, and drew her to her bosom; "about this journey, must it be as thee says?"

"I shall go to-morrow," replied the other.

"God go with thee," repeated Rebecca, and left the room with a smile that made the heavy heart light. After preparing a few things for the morrow's journey, Leoline went into a little chamber adjoining, and with a sincere, heartfelt prayer, commending herself to God's care, retired to rest.

Perhaps the reader may ask how a woman of her youth and loveliness came to live in a large, isolated, forsaken tenement. I can only reply that she had no rent to pay, that she earned her own living, and was ambitious to excel as a scholar; that many reasons, needless now to repeat, led her to seek solitude, and to shun the world around her. The old building was owned by Quaker John, and her privilege of occupying the most habitable part; his sister and herself lived only at the distance of a few squares, and the good Rebecca came in, sometimes, to cheer her solitude.

We have already seen Leoline upon a journey for two days in her strength, and prostrated at the house of Mrs. Dorsey with a sudden fever. It was not to be wondered at that a creature so refined in manner and lovely in person should win the heart of that good lady forthwith. The sadness under which she labored gave rise to a series of conjectures which Mrs. Dorsey was too nearly noble to express in words, for fear of wounding the feelings of her guest.

On the following day, Puck and the professor parted with many mutual regrets, the former promising to call on his next visit, "the days" when," said he, "they are as early as — this Decembr."

"I've found them," shouted Park, throwing open the window of his mother's sitting-room, "you must go and see them, mother; it will be worth your while."

"See what? What do you mean, my son?"

"Why, the Indians; they are encamped only a mile beyond the woods where we — Van Antyne and I — went the other day; they have been detained by the sickness of their chief, and they will start day after to-morrow for the West; what say you, mother, to a ride out there to-morrow?"

"I have no objections," replied Mrs. Dinsmore pleasantly; turning to Louise, who sat wrapped in a shawl, she said, seeing [illegible] countenance, "Park, shut that window, my son; you are giving our young friend a chill." Then as the thoughtless boy pulled down the sash, she added — "you would like to see the band of wandering Indians."

"Oh! if you knew!" exclaimed the young woman earnestly, "if you knew how much, and why I wish to see them! I will tell you," she added immediately, turning [illegible] from the compassion [illegible] the gentle face before her, "I have Indian blood in my veins; my mother is an Indian, the daughter of a chief. My father was an Englishman; you see I have his features and his complexion; my father was an officer in the English army; he educated my mother and married her. My father died when I was a child but [illegible] years old, and my mother then went back to her native country. She has seen much trouble — but — the greatest of all has [illegible] — the loss of her reason. An event — which plunged her in great affliction," continued the speaker, faltering, "happened some two years ago. I was thrown upon the world, — and — I can not tell you — it distresses me — it kills me!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears.

"You need not; I divine the rest," said Mrs. Dinsmore, moved by emotion; "your mother can not be controlled; she wanders over the country, and sometimes you hear of her whereabouts by chance, and you go, seek her and try to obtain an influence over her. But it is always so with those who labor under this misfortune, they turn away from the hand they have loved the best."

Before Louise could reply, John Lake, the Quaker preacher, was announced. Louise, springing to meet him, her cheeks flushing with a glad surprise. He sat down by her side, and, with fatherly interest, questioned her about her health, and gravely chid her for undertaking a journey so fatiguing alone. He gladly assented when invited to join "the Indian hunting-party," as Park named it, and was [illegible]

The next morning the party drove out to the Indian camping-ground. The spot which had been selected by the Indians was [illegible]

enchanting. By meadows and fields of late green, rolling in glittering waves down the slopes of the hills, through patches of dark woods, the party drove, and, reaching at last a pretty cottage, stopped upon a long reach of table-land, where now and then one giant-oak spread its broad foliage, painted with the colors of the rainbow. The cottage was like an Indian wigwam, thatched with leaves, and, on the boats, roofed and sided as they were. In the distance [illegible] Groups of Indians sat at the doors of their rude habitations, [illegible] moccasins, [illegible] the women looking [illegible] Every street is the party dressed and [illegible] The chief house was the largest, resting on [illegible] and [illegible] fronted by tall poles that [illegible] of a pole roof. The boughs of the neighboring [illegible] pots, pots, and bags of the [illegible] by [illegible] poles, descending over to the ground behind. The place was crowded in front and within, on the [illegible], as [illegible] to the [illegible], though it was somewhat tempted by [illegible] with the smoke of the pipe.

Lochiel, [illegible], trembling in every limb, [illegible] to find [illegible] in her mother's presence. Paul, [illegible] his intrusion, obtained an entrance into the tent of the chief for the whole company. A mellow light, [illegible] by the [illegible] of the primitive thatch, was [illegible] through the interior. On a bed of [illegible] boughs, over which was thrown a blanket, rested the chief, an old man of middle age and of commanding presence. His squaw, an intelligent-looking woman, was preparing Indian corn [illegible] in a wooden tray, but, obeying the simple gesture of her lord, she put [illegible] her work and filling his pipe, lighted and presented it to him. With a gravity becoming his state, he held out the pipe to Paul, who took it to his lips, then to the Quaker, next to Mrs. Dunscombe, and finally to Lochiel, upon whom he seemed to look with as much [illegible] as an Indian allows himself to express. She, with shaking hand and a trembling lip, just touched the mouth-piece, and handed it back to him. Then [illegible] a long silence, in which the chief [illegible] ing, still with his eyes fixed on Lochiel's face. The quiet [illegible] almost unendurable, and Lochiel, by [illegible] glances, urged first the Quaker, and then Paul, to break the [illegible] At last, [illegible] the [illegible] spoke, the chief exclaimed, [illegible] in English —

"Me glad to see you."

Upon this, Paul [illegible] his pocket-book [illegible] and words, each [illegible] attention [illegible] the interpreter, [illegible] of [illegible] places, and [illegible] each.

"Let us go round to [illegible] party," said Lochiel, hastily, "I can not bear this suspense."

"The young pale-face lady inquires for a strange squaw, who she thinks may be with your people; do you know if the Indian [illegible] with the Mohawks?" asked Park, on a hunt [illegible] hat shading his face, his hands folded over his knees.

[illegible] moments in an attitude [illegible] he asked,

"She Delaware Indian?"

"[illegible] by the deepening color in her cheek and fire in her eye, — "is she here?"

"[illegible] said the chief. "[illegible] — [illegible] higher," he added with great dignity.

[illegible] saying, as he did so,

"[illegible] the strange medicine-woman has been here, or *is* here?"

"[illegible] said the chief, holding the beads up to admire their [illegible] — tell dreams — tell hot or cold — tell wet or dry."

"[illegible] exclaimed Lettice, growing pale again.

"Where is she now?" inquired Park, earnestly.

"Gone again," replied the chief, stolidly.

"[illegible] said Park, "farther on, or back to Philadelphia?"

"[illegible] repeated the Indian, waving his hand impressively. "She got plenty medicines to cure the pale-faces; she great woman — ugh?"

[illegible] gather nothing more from this conference — and sick at heart, Lettice [illegible], and they all went out together. Curious groups had gathered near the chief's tent, and were chaffering to [illegible] their bows and arrows, their moccasins, bags and baskets. Park offered a pretty bag to his mother.

"I have only six at home," she said, laughing.

"[illegible] said Park, [illegible] a pair of gay moccasins, two baskets, and tables for [illegible] and sheath. As he [illegible] the Indian woman [illegible] for him to buy, [illegible] a [illegible] with soft black [illegible] and [illegible] her child, [illegible] and [illegible] her white teeth as she laughingly cried,

"[illegible] said the chief, [illegible] to be [illegible] a pretty, [illegible] as [illegible] to say, "I [illegible] I would not sell my baby."

[illegible] every daily [illegible] Lettice [illegible] and pale. She [illegible] a strange [illegible] that she should meet her [illegible] the time, but [illegible] to her bosom, and she said, sadly,

"I will go back to the city, and give up the search."

"Yea, for if Providence intends that thee shall find thy mother thee will certainly do so," said the Quaker, "in His own good time. It might not do either thee or her good, if thee met now. Thee must put thy faith in God."

CHAPTER IX.

A CONVERSAZIONE AT LE VAUGN'S — AN UNEXPECTED REVELATION.

A year and six months had passed by. Le Vaugn, since the death of his wife, had eschewed all society, confining himself closely to his cultured duties. He was now an altered man. Severe thought and mental and moral discipline had made him, to all appearance, [illegible] and recluse. Silver hairs had begun to sparkle in among his [illegible], dark locks; the sockets of his eyes had widened and [illegible], and his eyes seemed darker and heavier than in the years of his youth. He was alone in his great house, with Martha [illegible] housekeeper, a few under-servants, and Nick, who already began to show talents of no mean order. To Martha, with her [illegible], [illegible] and plain cry, Nick looked up with becoming reverence. She had taught him his prayers, improved his habits, and kept a constant and anxious watch over all his actions. His little room was next to hers, and she almost felt a motherly love, that developed itself in a thousand ways, and gave her a beauty, in the eyes of the boy, both moral and personal, that time might never efface. The little [illegible] had long had the benefit of the best teachers, and since Le Vaugn's [illegible] ins — who had toiled him beyond the stage that his [illegible] to endure — had retired, and gone to [illegible] of their own, he had made rapid progress to the utmost satisfaction of his instructors and his foster-father, who loved him with the intensity of a [illegible] heart, doubly gilded of all that had made life dear.

Up to this time Le Vaugn, as we have said, had, since his wife's decease, eschewed all society; but at the request of a friend who had formed an association intended to combine the fashionable with literary amusement, he had consented to open his palatial dwelling for their occupancy.

Le Vaugn at first intended to confide Nick to [illegible] in his own house, but [illegible] the idea, and the lad [illegible] with [illegible], and [illegible] all the [illegible], he [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] glass, [illegible] [illegible] Mrs. [illegible], who [illegible] [illegible], and [illegible], accompanied by Van [illegible] and Miss [illegible], [illegible] [illegible], [illegible], and [illegible]. As she [illegible], her eye roved round the room, and [illegible] at last upon Nick, who [illegible]

[illegible] cheek, his bright face shining with [illegible], his hair [illegible] and clustering in curls, and his soft, dark eyes handsome and [illegible]. As the hour advanced, the parlors began to [illegible] and grow warm. Many of the [illegible] comment upon the [illegible] passed, all the celebrities in literature, lawyers, doctors, [illegible] of high standing, women of learning and influence. The busy hum of conversation grew deeper and stronger [illegible] through all the door and north, and happiness, the Quaker's [illegible] in stood self-possessed, calm, and pale, generally gazing towards the door with an expression of perfect delight. Once he stood by her side, and, she, with a trembling pressure, laid her hand on his arm, and then with a shudder, glanced at Le Vargas, while an **expression of horror crossed her white face.**

"You will excuse us, I am sure, for leaving our little girl," said a sweet voice, and Le Vargas, turning, met the wife of Dr Angell, who held by the hand a slightly-formed and beautiful creature, whose **face was as spiritual as an angel's.**

"She has such an aversion to staying alone," said Mrs. Angell, half [illegible], "and is so strangely sensitive and imaginative that we never have her, so, as the doctor expressed a strong desire that I should come this evening, I ventured to break in upon the rules and bring a friend a little under twenty," she added, laughing.

"Lucy child," said Le Vargas, gazing into the sweet face upturned to his; and then stopping to hide some emotion that he did not wish to be seen, he raised the white forehead, and taking the small hands in both of his, pressed them fervently, his lips, that in spite of his self-possession trembled violently, and turned away for a moment. As he turned, he met the glance of the Quaker's fine eyes, and it fascinated him like the gaze of a serpent. He shuddered, and yet he felt impelled to look again, but as he essayed to do so, the woman moved away and mingled with the throng.

Lucy and Nick sat side by side, little conscious of the way in which their interests were woven with members of that brilliant company; she gazing about with an expression half of pleasure and half of pain, and he gazing at her, from an intense interest in the picture of loveliness presented to his view. Sometimes he would lay his hand on her hand, and then, as their glances met, a good smile broke over his face, to which she faintly responded. They could not, to [illegible] [illegible] in this fairy-land, the white, half-frightened, [illegible] of the ballroom. Horses were no longer the [illegible] [illegible] they were more than beauty so well. They had danced [illegible] [illegible], till they were tender enough hearted than a [illegible] Quaker maiden, the [illegible] poke, the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] light of any new object of interest, [illegible] [illegible]. She was new to the world, from [illegible] [illegible] with the breath of life.

"Where is Miss [illegible]?" asked Le Vargas, [illegible] [illegible] persons, in the [illegible] of whom were Park [illegible], [illegible] was violently flushed, and his friend the young professor,

standing leaning against the wall, a quiet smile on his lip and an absent expression in his glance.

"Why, we have come in [illegible] manner, of an antique romance, that [illegible] ter Angel, bearing a copy of verses to [illegible] to read them for the benefit of [illegible] this young gentleman (pointing to Paul) [illegible] we are indebted to them he at least [illegible] it is. Now, I propose to [illegible] ladies and gentlemen, in [illegible] dated yesterday, shall be read, the other [illegible] have it!" he exclaimed, [illegible] poem.

"Look!" said Le Vargas, in a [illegible] — "look at that child."

[illegible] attention he had thus called, turned to behold Chip, her hands pressed together, her eyes [illegible] glorious they grew as she listened, lost, wrapt in [illegible] every thing but the rhythm of the poem.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Le Vargas [illegible], "I'd give every thing I [illegible] sigh attested to the sincerity of his remark.

"Why! my little [illegible]!" [illegible] Chip, [illegible] strain [illegible] toward him. "Ah, [illegible] judge of poetry, too, but [illegible] tell you!" Paul, [illegible] his attention to the [illegible] eyes, a spark of celestial fire [illegible] young, slight, [illegible] as the [illegible] ment he loved her.

The evening had waned an hour, when [illegible] rest [illegible] reading the poem. Von Vargas, [illegible] dered [illegible] with [illegible], or [illegible] [illegible] for the last few [illegible] quite [illegible] excitement as he went.

"[illegible]" [illegible] [illegible] Mrs. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] At length [illegible] with apparent unconcern.

"I am not yet able to learn her name," replied one of the company.

"She was introduced to a party," remarked another, "as a friend of some, Miss ——; I really couldn't get the name. She is quite a curiosity, I think,—nobody knows her except the Dinsmores, and, I should imagine, Van Alstyne."

A low, sweet and [illegible] was ringing through the room. It was Leoline singing. Le Vergn, with his head bent over and leaning on his hand, let the heavy tear-drops fall one by one, until, with a [illegible] effort, he pressed them back and forced himself to be calm. Van Alstyne stood near the performer. There was no mistaking his admiring look, nor the [illegible] that accompanied it. [illegible] Leoline, Le Vergn could not repress a pang of jealousy that wounded his heart at Van Alstyne's manner.

"Had nobody told [illegible] I might have her name," he thought, "and perhaps I might [illegible] her. At least it is worth the trial."

Mrs. Dinsmore and Leoline soon after retired into a private dressing-room, kindly furnished them by the good Martha. Leoline sat in a dejected attitude, while her friend seemed striving to comfort her.

"No, no, my dear, kind mother," exclaimed Leoline in tones of deep anguish, "I cannot, I cannot consent to [illegible]. It has been [illegible] to me to meet the [illegible] gaze of even those who were here to-night. I never will be seen again as Leoline, except in my own home. I am satisfied that I shall never be happy in society. Let me go back to my grey gown; let me be the [illegible] of Quaker John's [illegible]; I will [illegible]. I shall never return to the world in this guise — you are not to blame," she added, seeing tears of distress in the eyes of Mrs. Dinsmore, "you, my [illegible], dearest friend, next to those who have [illegible]; [illegible]; I [illegible] the world had been [illegible], I must [illegible] — oh! why was this cross laid upon me?" she cried out in the anguish of her heart.

Mrs. Dinsmore was silent; what could she say to [illegible] without a sorrow.

After a few moments Leoline lifted her head, wiped her eyes, and [illegible]. "[illegible]," she proceeded to change her dress, while Mrs. Dinsmore quietly assisted her.

"[illegible]," replied Mrs. Dinsmore; "[illegible] Van Alstyne? Leoline, [illegible] against yourself and him."

[illegible] the door of the coach, as Leoline [illegible] Van Alstyne. He [illegible] and [illegible] her [illegible] beside her. The door was shut, and they were swiftly borne on.

"Where is Mrs. Dinsmore?" asked Leoline, in a low voice; "I thought she was to ride with us."

"No, Park made some other arrangement," replied Van Alstyne; "and I felt," he added rapidly, after a tremulous pause, "that I must unburden my soul to you this very night, Leoline —"

"Mrs. Swan, if you please," said the low, calm voice, though the whole figure had shrunk back, and rested throbbing against the side of the coach, dreading yet longing to hear the dear words that she would prevent — loving almost to adoration, yet abandoned to despair.

"Leoline — I — beg your pardon — still — could I be so mistaken?"

"Perhaps you do not yet understand," said Leoline, in a low, cold voice, holding every motion in check as she spoke — "Mrs. Swan, the forewoman of John Lake's straw shop," she repeated, in an explanatory manner. "Had you not better return?"

"No, no; pardon me," he said, drawing yet half checking a heavy sigh; "I observed that you were at the assembly, in the early part of the evening," he added, endeavoring to assume a more cheerful voice; "but Miss Leoline — the young lady, I mean, for whom I addressed you, certainly came with Mrs. Dassance. It was really very awkward of me not to perceive — she is a pupil of mine," stammered Van Alstyne, remembering the passionate character of his attempted address.

"I am aware of that," said the cold voice.

"You are, — then I presume you know the young lady."

"I am acquainted with her," was the reply.

"Indeed! Do you understand why she secludes herself from the world as she does? Has she parents? Is she a relative of friend Lake's? I have been told so."

"I cannot answer your questions," said the voice, now slightly tremulous.

"Well, she is a wonder. You heard her sing to-night? Was not that a voice to be proud of? Ah, she is an angel?"

With what secret rapture did Leoline drink in these words, conveying as they did a greater depth and meaning than he intended for the forewoman's passionless ear! and still came the chilling thought, "Oh! if he knew would he speak thus?" and the bitter doubt which she had nursed so many years, came wielding down her heart like a cold stone. The coachman now stopped to inquire where he should leave the lady.

"At friend Lake's garden-gate," said Leoline, "I have the key and can let myself in."

The pale March moon threw a clear, vivid light over the still ranks of the streets, and the tall houses loomed up like spectres in the silver light. The leafless trees, and bare gate, cast their pencil boughs against the white walls that towered on either side; the snow had been melting all day, and the great tribute of the water running down the streets, could be distinctly heard. Van Alstyne accompanied the forewoman to the garden-gate, saw her turn the key, both bade farewell, and he returned to his carriage. Leoline,

as she locked the door on the inside, moved hastily up the yard and turning to the right came to an arched passage. Going through this she found herself in the rear of the old house in which nearly a century before, amidst scenes of festivity by the marriage of Henry were marshalled [illegible]. It was a dark, brick mansion, its windows covered with heavy shutters, and each carried with heavy stone mullions. It was a lonely look, except that through the three glass panes over the door looking into the lumber and rubbish-filled yard, shone a small but steady light. Entering this door Leoline locked it again, and taking the little lamp from the floor, moved along the wide, uncarpeted hall over which the beams were curved, ascended the first flight of stairs, and entered her own room, in the fireplace of which a few brands yet smouldered. There she sat down, dejected and [illegible], even with the sweet words to which she had listened, still sounding in her ears. "He does love me," she murmured, "loves me for myself alone; and yet I must pain this great, good, noble heart with a refusal, and live ever after on the sweet remembrance of his affection."

The evening after the literary meeting took place at Mr. Le Vaugn's, he did not send a letter. It was nearly dusk before she left the shop, and quite candlelight when she had finished her daily essays, and sat down to her simple supper. The missive which she had observed in the hands of a boy whom she knew to be connected with Mr. Vaugn's office, she seemed in no haste to open; and it was not till the tea was drunk, and she had brushed the shining locks, that she broke the seal and began to read the four pages of closely written letter-paper. It was from Le Vaugn, pouring out his soul in contrition; acknowledging his sin, and praying for her forgiveness, and offering as the only reparation in his power, his hand, heart, and fortune, if she would but consent to accept them as a long years of sorrow and repentance. Over one sentence she paused a long time, the sad — "Our child is with me; I have taken him to my home and my heart, to educate, to treat in all respects as a son, to be my heir — to me the piece of my own lost child, and [illegible] I could never know. You never knew that he was [illegible], for I gave him as well as my name, I caused him to be [illegible] from home at home, and through a series of strange vicissitudes he was brought at last to my notice, nearly two years ago, while I was traveling in search of my own lost little girl."

[illegible] saying, "Does [illegible] the paper [illegible] to her [illegible] and [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] and her [illegible] [illegible] with the same unnatural composure [illegible] a faint gleam might have [illegible] but he was in the dark entry, and did not

see it. He came in and sat down. The fire-glow flickered over the wall as it was wont; a volume in Spanish lay open at the last lesson, [illegible] learned. A sheet of new music stood upright on the edge of the little old piano. Pen, ink and paper were all ready — every thing was right, neat, and proper, save Leoline, with her [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible]. A subtle change fell over Van Alstyne; it seemed to emanate from her presence. He [illegible] on the chimney-piece; he gazed long and vaguely at a [illegible]-toned picture hanging against the old wall. All was silent and dead; there seemed to be vitality neither in himself, Leoline, nor the surroundings.

"What did you think of the assembly?" he asked, at length, leaning back, as he lifted the Spanish grammar in his right hand.

"I scarcely know," replied Leoline.

"Shall we commence where we left off?"

"I cannot study," replied Leoline, coldly; then, as if gathering new strength to say something not altogether agreeable, she added, rising as she spoke, "Mr. Van Alstyne, I shall not require your tuition after this evening."

Had he heard aright? he looked at her as one stunned — as if a blow had been dealt him.

"Miss Leoline, what have I done to displease you?"

"Nothing — oh! believe me, nothing! it is —" for *my peace* she would have added, but she checked herself.

"Miss Leoline, this is sudden — have you thought of taking this step previous to to-night?" he asked, knowing scarcely what he said.

She did not answer, but sank into her seat, incapable of speech.

"Before I go," said Van Alstyne, stooping a little as if a burden had been suddenly put upon him, while his mild eyes grew clouded, and his hair hung damp across his pale, fair forehead, "before I go, permit me to say, in as few words as possible, that I love you. My courtship has been brief and honest; give me as brief and as honest an answer, and if it is not favorable, I will — bear my fate."

How she trembled! One moment relenting, the next falling back upon her strong resolve; one moment longing to look up in his face, and lay her hand in his; the next denying even this small indulgence, lest her resolution should give way, and she waver in her mistaken sense of duty.

"Leoline, does this silence imply that I must leave you?" asked Van Alstyne, at last; and had she turned to him then, she must have relented at sight of the woe in his eyes.

"No — yes. Yes! leave me, forget me! — go! I am [illegible] to you — [illegible] [illegible] that I [illegible] [illegible] I could [illegible]! My [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]!" she cried with [illegible] voice and [illegible]. "Do not ask me why," she added, as he [illegible] toward her, "only go, only forget me!" and the words were lost in sobs.

Van Alstyne stood irresolute, distressed, unable to interpret the

vehemence of her manner. The words that had been thronging to his lips remained unspoken; but he did speak at last, and his voice was dry and husky, as he said,

"This, then, must be a final interview?"

"I think," [illegible] with a finger [illegible] toward him.

"Then, farewell!" he said, [illegible] the words sounded as if they came [illegible] — "give me your hand, as a token that I am not altogether unwelcome to you."

[illegible] the wild, leaping, throbbing pulsation of the poor heart [illegible] But he could not. The hand he [illegible] cold and [illegible]. In the [illegible], [illegible] hold her eyes [illegible] up in the [illegible] and still was [illegible] the very light of day to her [illegible]. Dizzy, sick, and [illegible], Von Alsgoe turned away. His temples throbbed, his [illegible] unsteadily, [illegible] of fire seemed heaped upon his heart. [illegible] his way to the door, groped down the dark staircase [illegible], for [illegible] set on a stager where he had sat when he last [illegible], and plunged into the street. It was a cold, wet night. The [illegible] rattled the signs, and blew a fine cutting rain in his face; [illegible] was sent upon the sidewalk, an inky blackness overhead, the [illegible] burned dimly here and there; black spectators, with umbrellas [illegible], [illegible] along in the [illegible] glare, picking their cautious way with a strange, spectral motion, and wherever the sound of mirth [illegible] from some central group of home and happiness, it seemed as inappropriate as laughter at a funeral.

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH CHIP IS RECOGNIZED BY THE INDIAN.

Unconscious whither or how far his rapid steps carried him, Von Alsgoe moved mechanically on. How he came there he knew not, but suddenly he found himself in front of the handsome residence occupied by Dr. Angell, and the instant of a reckless [illegible] and [illegible] his footsteps. It was a cheerful sight, a comfort that the [illegible] gazed. Several wax candles, set in high, antique candlesticks, [illegible] a dance over the room. [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible], and in the long [illegible] on the opposite side of the room, conspired to make a delightful home interior.

[illegible] were the first to spring from his seat and welcome Von Alsgoe. Mrs. Angell and a maiden sister, with Mrs. Dinsmore

and Chip, who had been sitting by Park's side on the sofa, were the other inmates of this pleasant parlor. The doctor was absent on his professional visits, but Mrs. Angell hoped would soon be in.

The keen eye of Mrs. Dixon [illegible] even to Van Alstyne's most secret thought. It was true that she [illegible] the cause of his depression, and he [illegible] of pity that at any time his pale face, [illegible] with the [illegible] that every latent [illegible] was [illegible]. Park was too much engaged with the [illegible] at his side to give much attention to his friend.

"Oh! she's the prettiest little wonder alive," he exclaimed, aside, to the latter; "I'm just bewitched with her. Van Alstyne," he added, a few moments afterward, with great seriousness, "I'm going to make her my wife."

"Nonsense!" said the professor, his cheek flushing and paling — "that child!"

"Yes, that child! Why not? By and by she'll not be a child. I tell you she has been revealed to me, and as sure as she lives and I live, I'll marry her."

Van Alstyne smiled, or tried to smile in his friend's face.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Angell, speaking quickly.

A red face was thrust in at the open door, and leaving it still ajar, the girl who stood there said,

"Indeed, Mrs. Angell, there's the queerest old man come to sell books out in the kitchen, and he's dressed in the queerest sort of way, and he says, 'mayn't he see the lady, and tell her fortune, or sing a song for her?' so I come to see."

Park burst into a hearty laugh, while the doctor's wife said,

"I don't know as I care about seeing him.

"Oh! Mrs. Angell, do let the man come in," said Park; "I dote on fortune-tellers, don't you, little Lena?" he asked, kissing the nestling child.

"Let him come in if he is any way decent," said Mrs. Angell, and away went the maid.

Presently a tall, dark, hairy, slender old man entered, with a woman's cloak hanging from his shoulders, under which might be seen a [illegible] coat and breeches. A [illegible] gleaming [illegible] table from his neck almost to his knees; a [illegible] coat, and [illegible], under which stood out a [illegible] of shirt, striped [illegible] in [illegible] protector.

Park started, and exchanged a glance of [illegible] with Van Alstyne, as the [illegible] Van Alstyne looked [illegible] the strange [illegible] apparently aged man — but when the latter said, turning to Mrs. Angell, "Shall I sing for you, lady? I have some little songs I sing for people who buy my books," he nodded his head to Park, and for a moment his sadness was merged in curiosity

"Shall I sing, or shall I tell you a story? I tell stories, too, to amuse the ladies and gentlemen — yes, I'll tell you a story:

"Once, [illegible] a little child. It was a poor little child, [illegible] without any friends — a very, very lonely child. [illegible] bird to its nest — the poor little child, [illegible] — and he got a beautiful cage for it, a golden cage, and he put it where the sunlight came in on it, and he fed it with [illegible] bird began to grow up. Little by little the feathers came and the food grew, and the color made the wings bright, and the bird began to sing sweet tunes. Every day it grew louder and louder, for it was the loudest bird that ever was seen; and the man who found it wouldn't take — no, not thousands of dollars for it. But one day there came an eagle with a black feather in his wings, and when he saw this beautiful bird, he wanted it; and he watched a time — he watched — yes — time," continued the stranger, his voice growing lower and deeper, "and one day he came with a great sweep, and caught the bird, and tore it all to pieces."

As he said this, the stranger turned, and, pointing to Chip, from whose lips the color had fled, cried, stretching out his scrawny, skinny fingers at the child:

"Look out for the bird — the eagle is coming!"

Once again, piercing screams filled the room; the sensitive child lay in a dreadful swoon, and as Mrs. Angel rushed toward her, with the rest, the stranger left the room.

Pale as a white lily, the poor little girl lay in her protector's arms, while Park knelt beside her, applying restoratives to her nostrils, and passed the masses of tangled hair back from her brow. Slowly returning to consciousness, at last Chip lifted her head and gazed about wildly, crying.

"Take me away! where is she?"

In vain the earnest, soothing tones of Park, and the quiet, loving presence of the lady's voice. The eyes, the features, the gestures of the stranger were too strongly stamped upon her memory to be forgotten, and with [illegible] her kind protector saw the work of long months [illegible] mutilated, and reproached herself for having [illegible] who, it was plainly to be seen, was [illegible] crazed. And, [illegible] Park, sitting [illegible] her [illegible] angel, [illegible] of [illegible], her very heart grew cold at the recollection of the old man's story.

"A little bird, a poor little bird found by the roadside," she thought, "and he is a gilded cage — a cage beautiful, and of great value — the [illegible] is strong; yet what could these [illegible] of our poor little bird? 'Look out for the bird — the eagle is coming.'"

An unutterable terror took possession of her heart as the words dashed upon her brain, but she dared not give it voice, for Chip lay trembling on her heart.

Excusing herself, the doctor's wife led her charge out of the room, holding her with a strong grasp, to her own chamber, and there with prayer and sweet womanly encouragement, strove to soothe her to forgetfulness.

"Well, what do you think, Van Alstyne?" asked Park, as he accompanied the former to the door.

"Just as you do, I presume," said the professor, mildly.

"That was the old woman, Mother Kurstegan, as sure as you live."

"I know it," replied Van Alstyne.

"Why didn't we follow the old witch? Van Alstyne, this is a strange matter — the more I think of it, the more it perplexes me; why should she feel such a mad interest in this child? Let me whisper in your ear — little Lena is a foundling, and that Indian woman is Leoline's own mother!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the professor, a sudden light breaking in on his mind.

"Say nothing of it yet — they worship the child," murmured Park.

"And this crazed creature is the mother of Leoline!" thought Van Alstyne, as he strode on to his lodgings; "and can it be that she imagines a relation so unhappy would be any bar to my love? No, no! if she were twice an outcast I would love her! I will not believe her answer final! I must hope, even against hope!"

The pretended man was, of course, no other than Mother Kurstegan. For a year she had wandered in this disguise through every part of the city, in rich men's houses, and the hovels of the poor, seeking her lost treasure. In every kitchen in which she was admitted, her skill in fortune-telling by palmistry, won her a ready ear and a quick train from the servants. If there were children in the family, she made a pretence that she could tell their future destiny by some sign of form and feature, and she seldom left any dwelling until she had accomplished the purpose for which she had entered it. On the night in question she had heard enough from the servants to recognize in the strange child, on whose peculiarities they were ready to dilate, Chip of the cave — and as she hurried down the broad street her heart bounded with a savage joy as she reflected on the possibility of again possessing her, and so torturing the father's soul afresh. Pausing in her walk at length, and looking attentively to see that she was not followed, she packed on to the lower part of the city, and disappeared among the gloomy buildings that lifted their tall fronts to the docks and the sea-river.

At twelve o'clock the stores had closed away. The [illegible] close into the house, to the attic of a tall old house overlooking the Delaware. A straw bed scantily covered, crowded up against the wall, upon which lay a restless form. Tied to nails on the wall were bunches of dried herbs, and paper was scattered in fragments on the floor beneath and over the floor. An old clock

around the recumbent person, a heap of clothes seemed to have been gathered up for additional warmth — a man's hat stood on one hand [illegible], [illegible], a [illegible] on the other.

"[illegible] was a dreadful night," continued the Indian; "I dreamed of it. It must have been [illegible] — [illegible] I [illegible]. 'Oh, [illegible] old [illegible]' she cried, [illegible], wrapping her cloak about her, she walked to and fro, while the [illegible] ran up and down between the rafters, keeping her [illegible]. "[illegible]! would God I had taken them to the [illegible] — oh, [illegible] cursed [illegible]! my father is gone, my husband is gone, my [illegible] is gone, my people are gone — I am alone; a naked tree stripped of its branches, its roots, its life, and leaves [illegible] a [illegible] — [illegible] to eternity. I wish I could forget," she [illegible], [illegible] herself, and swaying her bonnet to and fro, 'forget the [illegible] I have [illegible], the [illegible] I have lived in, the [illegible] that have been done and that I have done — all, all but my happy days in the woods, before I knew the pale-face. How white he [illegible]! I [illegible], and to the tree. And I flew to him, hung on his neck, [illegible] his life, saved him, loved him, fled with him, married him, lost him. [illegible] to be happy I should have gone to the [illegible] forests; [illegible] that the [illegible] of society had [illegible] [illegible], and brought my child up to be the [illegible] a [illegible]. Oh! [illegible] that I hate my own child." Again she resumed her walk, and the [illegible] [illegible]. "They took the child from her and gave it to another; poor thing! to suffer so, and then [illegible]; it was a [illegible] night — they carried the child away, and the woman who took it died the next week; that was strange. I [illegible]; that was a fine [illegible] [illegible] — Lord [illegible] [illegible], that I [illegible] my own [illegible]. Then I sent [illegible] [illegible] and went home without [illegible] — as I meant he should, [illegible]. I saw him [illegible] finely dressed, with money in his hand — [illegible]. If it had been dark and I could have [illegible] I'd have done it — that I would. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] — I wish [illegible] would [illegible] — I wish [illegible] [illegible] the face of the earth."

She had risen and stood gazing out upon the strange circle gradu-

ally forming about the moon. There was a faint red streak crossing its disk, and the gathering clouds, light as they were, took weird shape. The Indian's face became with unnatural fire; her cheek-bones, more prominent than ever and long lasts, seemed closing over her eyes; her hair cut short hung on her forehead, stiffly, and down along the temples. Her ankles and her feet were bare — and her hands crossed each other, clutching the much-worn crimson cloak. She stood there till the moonlight faded from the sky, and left the night to go out in darkness

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Le Vaugn was sitting in his sanctum the next morning, when Dr Angell hurriedly entered.

"You look flushed, my dear fellow," said Le Vaugn, offering a seat

"Flushed, and well I may; I've been ever since three o'clock this morning on my feet; there are so many cases of fever, and they began just as they did last year, in the vicinity of these untrained marshy tracts, which I'm afraid will be hot-beds of pestilence by the fall. I tell you we are in danger. There's the accumulation of a year's drainings in the wharf-slips, where the water is cut off from the current of the river; I was down with the physician of the hospital inspecting them to-day. What the result will be when the heat of July steams down over the mud and vegetable matter, and green slime, and rotten wood, and draws up the putrid gas to mix it with the atmosphere, God knows."

"The matter was discussed last fall," said Le Vaugn.

"I know it; and with what results? If ever the Scripture declaration was true of any people, it is of our Philadelphians, —'they have madness in their hearts.' For three years I have been laboring to have them take hold of this matter. Our streets are pregnant with death; our very houses are full of the seeds of disease. I tell you, Le Vaugn, I wouldn't live in Philadelphia after the first of August, if I could make one hundred dollars in gold every day: and I have an awfully solemn conviction that we are on the eve of some great calamity, which I believe will come in the shape of pestilence, if the people don't take this matter into consideration. We can't violate natural laws and nature, and escape the consequences."

"Write an article about this matter, and I'll publish it," said Le Vaugn.

"Certainly I will; but — excuse me, madam." In stepping back, for he had arisen, he came in contact with a woman who had entered noiseless, and was leaning the door. The doctor's sudden exclamation caused Le Vaugn to look up, and to change color as he did so. Mother Kentogan, in her faded scarlet and crimson cloak, with piercing eyes and erect figure, her lips pressed together, a look of fatigue rendering her crimson and dark more repulsive, for she had slept none the preceding night, stood before him.

"Well!" said Le Vaugn, glancing uneasily towards the doctor

who, betrayed into surprise, was involuntarily studying the face of the woman. Dr. Ancell, bowing, immediately went out, and Le Vaugh gave evidence by the pallor, by convulsive knitting of the brows, by an agitation of the nostrils, and heaving of the breath, how terribly our presence was felt by him. He tried to conceal his restlessness, his impatience — and, with a suddenness, which he was not from feeling, he requested her to seated

"Never, in your presence," she exclaimed, with a restless eye "I want money, and you must give me some. I am hungry! I am cold! besides I have something to tell you, if you will give me money!"

"Something to tell you" — that proved the open sesame to Le Vaugh's purse. His sternness melted: "Give me the truth concerning my child, and you shall never know want," he said, standing up close to her side, though she tried to shrink from him. "You shall live in my own house; sit by my fireside and be honored, and happy; and, listen," he continued — "I will make your daughter my wife, if she will marry me."

The Indian's eye blazed; her whole face kindled with indignation as she towered above her own tall stature, and flashed upon him a look of hate, scorn, defiance, loathing, — all concentrated in one scorching glare.

"Marry me," she exclaimed, in a choking voice. Then drawing her breath tightly, her nostrils dilated, and the veins of her temples swelled almost to bursting, she repeated, "marry *you!* I'd burn her to death, as sure as there is a God in Heaven, if I thought she would stoop to marry you."

"Come, woman, stop this nonsense," said Le Vaugh hoarsely, stung in his turn; "it needs but a very little provocation to make me give you up to justice as a most abominable criminal, a child-stealer — murderer, for what I know."

The yell of laughter that rang from the Indian's throat, as she clenched her empty claws around her, was so shrill and unearthly, that it brought several of the men from the room adjoining to the door of the office.

"Hush! that woman," exclaimed Le Vaugh, shutting the door upon the curious faces. "Here, how much money do you want? Take it and go; I am hell when you are by."

"We'll be even — twice my wrongs — both of us. Oh!" she cried, with another crazed laugh, "how glad I am there is a hell; how I do remember you there! a hell! a real!" she cried again — "Yes, there is a hell."

"Look, here is money," said Le Vaugh, now white as a sheet, throwing twenty-dollar pieces of gold — "go, leave me; if you want more, write, but don't come near me again, it is best for you, best for me."

"Yes, this money looks handsome; it glitters; they needn't say palm trees don't grow in this country, for there's a golden palm," she added, her mood flowing a new vagary as she held out her

hand on which the money was spread: "now look here; you think I'm crazy, I know; there never was a greater mistake; I'm just as sane as you are; I know all about you — I know all about Lorline. I know all about — what did you call her?" she added with a savage curdling.

"[illegible] stop! stop! don't [illegible] to frenzy, woman."

"Perhaps you didn't recall her, but I did; Chip was her name, but [illegible] now! Oh! the [illegible] and the satin! how beautifully they *do* dress her!"

Le Vaugn groaned — the blood gushed upward to his brain; the [illegible] was [illegible]. Had this demon sold his child to infamy and ruin? The [illegible] crushed him, and even the poor demented creature, giving in his misery, seemed entreated to pity as she heard him moan, for she said, softly, "Man! if you feel such sorrow for your child, scarcely seen or known, think of the mother who has loved her daughter up to womanhood, only to have her destroyed. Forewell! your child is in this city; destruction and pestilence are coming in the air; but, mark me, if the pestilence spares her I will not;" and so saying she went from the office, leaving Le Vaugn sick and bewildered.

CHAPTER XL

CHIP AGAIN MISSING — MOTHER KERSHAW AND HER PRIZE.

THE gas flared on the mantle-top, the curtains swayed to and fro, wooed by a cool breeze that came from the river. Suddenly a [illegible] fell [illegible] the stairs, and Park burst in, flushed, breathless, [illegible] in look and manner.

"Dinsmore! why, what —"

"Oh, she's gone — lost — stolen!" cried Park, throwing himself [illegible] the table, and bowing his head on his [illegible]; [illegible] up, [illegible]; "Van Astyne, I'm almost crazy! Mrs. Astyne is in despair — little bird, little Lena is carried off!"

"[illegible]" said Van Astyne, [illegible], his blood crawling.

"[illegible] I, and [illegible] passionately, like a child.

"Don't, don't, my dear Park," said the professor, half trembling [illegible] over Park's trouble [illegible]; "don't give way to your feelings; it may not be so bad, you know; she'll be found."

"Oh, but the carriage! — the doctor's horse and chaise, both gone, and had been for half an hour, when he came out! You see," continued Park, wiping his streaming eyes and steadying his voice that wavered and trembled, "Doctor [illegible] was called in to a [illegible] [illegible] he was driving home, at [illegible] this afternoon. His horse [illegible], you know, being [illegible] with him; and thought he shouldn't be gone but a minute or so, and he left her sitting in the chaise. Well, he found [illegible] a bad one, and you know how absent-minded he [illegible]; I've no doubt he forgot the poor child, and oh, Van Alstyne, when he went out, [illegible], and [illegible], they were gone, horse, chaise, and all. You know we seldom ride," and heaving a heavy sigh, Park wiped the tears that flowed afresh, saying, "I haven't cried [illegible] since I was a little fellow, but I am just about used up, I am, indeed."

"Horse and chaise gone!" said Van Alstyne; "did any-body see it drive off?"

"Yes; one old man standing in a shop-door at the corner; a half-blind old fellow, he was — that is, he couldn't see, of course, very much, but that somebody jumped into the chaise and drove off; he thought it was the doctor. It wasn't a minute after he had gone in."

"And she was too much frightened to scream, poor child," said Van Alstyne.

"Oh, don't, don't, you make me creep!" exclaimed Park, turning to his friend, with a shudder; then suddenly starting up, he added, "[illegible] going [illegible] as soon as the doctor is [illegible] the [illegible] in the world — he was [illegible], poor [illegible]. I had just gone round there to try and [illegible] Mrs. [illegible] — we have two carriages in town, you see; when the doctor came in [illegible] a ghost, [illegible] says he, '[illegible], [illegible] is gone, [illegible], and all.' [illegible] for [illegible]; [illegible], but [illegible] till they [illegible]. Ever since then the doctor and I have raced with every [illegible] on the road in hopes [illegible]. It's clear as daylight [illegible] the child — that [illegible] crazy Indian has her."

"Havn't you seen Le Vaugn?"

"[illegible], Van Alstyne, I thought of that, but I'm [illegible]. As sure as you and I live, that old woman wouldn't be after her if she wasn't his child, and now when he [illegible]. [illegible], if he [illegible], but what he'd [illegible]. I [illegible] Le Vaugn is [illegible], and [illegible]. But I couldn't say."

"[illegible]," said Van Alstyne, [illegible], they left the [illegible] together.

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On the [illegible] of [illegible]'s abduction, Le Vaugn had left the

city in his own chaise, to be present at a christening. As he rode along, and felt the cooler, sweeter breezes of the country air play upon his brow, his spirits revived. Nick was with him, full of wild glee, exulting in the ride, and in the pleasure of accompanying Le Vaugn.

"What do you get on the seat that way for, my son?" asked Le Vaugn, as the boy turned, and, half-kneeling, looked through the square in the back of the chaise.

"To see if anybody's coming — oh! yes, there's a big cloud of dust — how heavy a horse must step to make so much dust — great clouds! our little gray doesn't, she travels beautifully! guess the folks are in a hurry — there, that's Doctor Angell's great brown horse, I declare! And there's Lena — yes, sitting way back; I guess doctor's taking her out to ride; he let me have a *grand* ride day before yesterday. Whew! they're coming fast — father, there's the doctor and Lena; let's stop 'em and speak to 'em."

"The doctor! who, where?" said Le Vaugn, abstractedly, as Nick turned round in order to lean out of the carriage. No sooner had he attained this position, than the other shot by like an arrow, while Nick cried out at the top of his voice, "I say, doctor! stop — it's us."

Away went the chaise as if a demon held the reins, and a faint cry came back upon the still air as it dashed ahead.

"You must be mistaken, my son," said Le Vaugn, increasing his own speed.

"No! I'm sure it was her, but the doctor had a handkerchief tied over his hat, and it fell almost to his chin; and she did scream, didn't she? I'm sure it was Lena, father."

"Strange!" said Le Vaugn, absently; "the doctor may have been called on some case of life and death; yes, the child certainly did scream — perhaps she laughed because the old brown beat my gray."

"I rather think so," replied Nick; "but at any rate it was Lena, and she looked frightened. You don't think the horse is running away, father?"

Le Vaugn's face expressed some concern as he gazed along the road, and saw the chaise still dashing on. "Oh, no," he replied, lightly, "Dr. Angell knows too well how to manage a horse for that — still —" Nick looked at him anxiously, and the two watched the rapidly-vanishing cloud, till a turn in the road hid it from sight, and then Le Vaugn added, "I guess they're safe enough." But a strange uneasiness possessed him; his thoughts would follow the chaise, the doctor with a handkerchief over his face, and the shout or shriek that had caught his ear as they passed. At every opening he would stretch forward, and to Nick's "Do you see them, father?" answer, "Oh, no! I didn't expect to," although it was evident, from his strained and nervous glances, and his occasional exclamations of — "They must have gone that way!" or, "They must have turned that road," that he still dwelt anxiously upon the circumstance.

It was forgotten, however, amid the gayety of the evening, but recurred again while they were returning in the fresh and golden calm of a June morning.

Arriving in town, and leaving Nick at the house, Le Vaugn drove slowly to his office. Strangely enough, the memory of the last [illegible] that he had taken nearly two years ago, came back vividly to his mind. He remembered with what solemn forebodings he had passed from street to street; the terrible and unwelcome news that met him at his own door-stone, the sad days and months that had passed over his head since then, filled up with no great or good or [illegible] deeds. He stopped before the dingy door of his office, and alighting, ran hastily up-stairs. Park Dinsmore and Van Alstyne were just that moment leaving. Struck with their haggard faces, he paused with one foot on the threshold, looking inquiringly at them.

"We have something to communicate to you," Park said, at last, retreating backward into the office, and Le Vaugn, mute, fearful, and pale, followed them, until the three stood round his desk.

"Doctor Angell has lost his little girl," said the professor.

"Heavens!" exclaimed Le Vaugn, "when did she die?"

"She is not dead," returned Van Alstyne; "she is stolen."

"Ha!" cried Le Vaugn, the incident of yesterday striking sharply on his recollection. "I had forgotten it entirely; I declare it had crossed my mind!" he said, vaguely, looking at them.

They returned his look, not being able to comprehend him.

"They passed us, yesterday; yesterday, in the afternoon, near four o'clock — right on our road, and we after them, and it never occurred to me that there was any thing wrong."

Park listened — his agitation was extreme; he stood there white and almost nerveless.

"Did you see them?" he asked. "Oh, can it be possible? Near them — so near, and let them escape?"

"My dear boy, I was totally in the dark about it. I am now; sit down and tell me, and command me to the utmost; I pledge you my word I am the last man to turn away from following after a stolen child;" and a quick shade of anguish crossed his features.

"We have come to tell you," said Van Alstyne, reluctantly, while Park seated himself a little back from the desk, and turned his face the other way. "Circumstances have transpired that lead us to believe that — that — in fact, the child whom we all love and look upon with no ordinary interest, is not in reality the daughter of Doctor and Mrs. Angell."

"What!" exclaimed Le Vaugn, excitedly; "my God! whose is she, then? tell me — tell me. I beg your pardon;" my sudden impatience troubles me — go on;" and forsaken of all his strength he sank back in his seat.

"The child is a foundling," continued Park, who, at the first violent gesture had sprung back to them; "she was taken from the roadside about seven miles from Goodale's inn, among the hills there, and the circumstances under which she was discovered, tend to show that she had been utterly neglected. For two years Mrs. Angell has been developing her mental faculties, which seemed before entirely

dormant. She could get no clue to the former situation of the child except that — she said she had lived — you will not hear me out, sir.

"I will, I will!" exclaimed Le Vargn, with desperate eagerness, clutching at the sides of his chair till his hands were purple with the effort; "only tell me one thing; do they suspect who stole the child?"

"They do."

Le Vargn breathed hard, and sat with painful and fixed look as he uttered, under his voice —

"Who?"

"An Indian woman who has been prowling about here for seven years!"

"Madness!" burst from the blue lips of Le Vargn; "and she came within my grasp! My child — my darling, my motherless babe. Good God! I am fate's football!"

The tone was so heart-broken — the words so pitiful, that Van Alstyne turned away to hide his tears. The strong man stood, weak and swaying now, like a reed bent by the tempest. The knowledge that he had touched the hand, the lips, the silken locks of his own dear child — that he had gazed at her with feelings he could neither fathom nor define; that her innocent voice had been heard in his own house; that her heart had beat, once, close to his own — and that now she was borne away, Heaven only knew whither; the knowledge of so much more than mortal bliss, making his agony tenfold more awful, nearly overthrew his reason, and he stood with a fixed and almost maniacal stare, gazing into space. It was but for a moment. With swelling nostrils and flashing eyes, he leaped out of his trance.

"I'll find her, if it costs me my life," was all he said, and he rushed from the office.

Officers were sent in all directions after the lost child. The doctor searched unceasingly, giving his business entirely over to his colleague for the time. Mrs. Atwell suffered more perhaps than any one else; her intimate knowledge of the child's habits, antipathies, and extraordinary sensitiveness, making her more keenly and distressingly alive to the thousand miseries and dangers to which in all probability she would be subjected. She could hardly eat or sleep during the time the search lasted. Le Vargn with the doctor took the same road he had traveled before, and by dint of constant inquiry and indefatigable patience, traced the pair to a tavern twenty miles from the city. Strangely enough the first person that greeted the doctor was the redoubtable Mrs. Scratchin, with bare arms and dress tucked up, bustling about and looking very rosy.

"Dear me, doctor, yes, 'tis me!" she exclaimed, in hearty response to his expression of surprise, "and you may be sure I don't get anything to do more than I ever had with nine children and a great house like this to look after. Some people be most and died and left me here alone with all, poor man. I expect he's better off, but I don't, I can't tell you. I was too busy, and I didn't have a chance to keep

tavern, and so here I be. A man and a little girl — why, yes, a man or a woman I don't rightly know which, for he looked like one and spoke like t'other. A horse and chaise — ma! that's what they come in, and she, I mean he, took the gal out and brought her in, and it really made me ache to look at the poor dumb thing. She made me think of that same poor critter that you took off, doctor — what ever did become of her?"

"That's the same child we are looking for," said the doctor, gravely.

"Good gracious — mercy — patience — laws!" exclaimed Mrs. Snackskin, holding up her hands, and then depositing them upon her capacious lips; "you don't say! Why this one was a regular little wax doll, and the other was a rag-baby."

"We can't lose a minute," said the doctor, smiling in spite of himself at the comparison; "tell us which way they went and at just what time."

"Well, I was going to say that the feller, if she was a feller, went into a room and came out again presently with the child, my sakes! you should o' seen her! why, she was that changed I dare you to know her, even you the feller of it as it were. I couldn't see no hair — one great hood was tied across her forehead, another under her chin, just for all the world as if she was a live corpse."

Le Vaugn staggered against the wall.

"Is the gentleman sick?" asked the garrulous Mrs. Snackskin — "would he like something?" and on receiving a negative she went on — "Well, we put the sorrel thing into the chaise, and tied herself up, or rather — saying it's a lie — rumbledy bumbledy, and off they flew, just ten minutes after four o'clock; and so that's all I know, 'cept that there's the road they took; and I reckon you won't find 'em if you go ever so right smart."

With a strong hope they followed the indicated route. It was now two o'clock, a warm, somewhat lowering day. They rode on in silence, stopping at every tavern, and almost every habitation. Some hope sent the horses at such a pace; it was driving very fast, and the horse showed something failing. At last they came into a tract of wild land. The ground had evidently been traveled very recently, for though it was nearly in the heart of the pine woods, they found the wood-ways torn, the horses scattered, and the wheels were caught by projecting roots and branches, which stood across the path.

"I don't see how we can make any progress here," said the doctor, "and still this old watch has managed to get my horse through, for the marks are here. I have an idea that if we leave the horse here and go on foot, we shall fare as well, if not better; we are fresh and the horse is not."

The proposition Le Vaugn accepted, and they alighted and [illegible] fastened [illegible] to a tree. [illegible] brought down by the [illegible] and [illegible], and in every way much damaged, since for Angelique's sake [illegible] Clipes's pretty little hat

her dress throughout, except shoes and stockings, and the hat that had probably been worn by the Indian woman. Le Vaugn groaned as the eyes of both gentlemen met.

"The horse is gone," said Doctor Angell, looking about.

"And has been since last night," added Le Vaugn; "probably she is sixty miles from here. She took the horse and retraced her steps from this spot, but where next she went, Heaven only knows!"

"I tell you it's going to be a hard chase," said the doctor. "Now we have this clue, we had better return and hire some Indian scouts; perhaps they can track her from this very spot."

"Keep on now, for the sake of mercy!" exclaimed Le Vaugn, anxiously; "let us at least spend to-day in the search. We can find Indians in the village beyond, who will aid us."

The day waxed and waned; another and another followed and closed and no success; the wily Indian had eluded them all. Little did they dream that with the wonderful cunning of insanity, the crazed creature had stolen back into the city in the dead of night, sought her miserable quarters, and there, in her old disguise, successfully eluded all discovery, while the horse, left to himself, walked quietly to his stable, and was there found by his owner. With the money she had obtained from Le Vaugn, and which really was a considerable amount, Mother Kurstegan had bought furniture for the old room overlooking the river, and lavished some pains upon its arrangement; so that but for its size and dreary unpapered walls, it would have looked quite comfortable. As it was, in the early summer the prospect from the window was admirable. The Delaware, with its moving panorama, the ever-moving ships, the constant passing of vehicles, the tree-covered island in the middle of the river, the wide prospect of sky and distant highlands of the surrounding country, made a pleasant look-out. Hither was Chip carried, almost helpless from fear, on the night of the day on which she had been stolen. The house was inhabited, room by room, by separate families, all foreigners, who could not even speak a word of the English language. Among them, for the time, Mother Kurstegan was safe. She had procured a key for the entrance, and in the dead of night led the unresisting child up flight after flight of stairs, until at last she arrived at her own dwelling. Here the moon shone in, and Chip stood in the center of the room, looking about her with an expression almost vacant, so hopeless was it. There she stood, silent, the big tears beginning to roll down her cheeks, while Mother Kurstegan busied herself to strike a light. She put her hands up to her locks that had been trained to curve over her neck in beautiful and shining rings. The curls were gone. She looked at the face that had ever been an object of terror to her, and her little heart grew cold. But the troubles of the twenty minutes that had rolled so swiftly past had not been without their benefit. She had overcome, in some degree, the fear of the supernatural, and this trial was needed to strengthen in her the habit of self-dependence that had but just begun to spring up in her heart, to lead her nature. In the few

moments that she stood there, she grew rapidly older. Why she had been thus ruthlessly separated from all the endearments of her beloved home, she could not fathom; but that she had not been carried to the then wilds of the Long Lines, was a matter of gratitude. That she was in the city she knew; for at the end of the country road, Mother Kurshedan had lifted her from the horse, saying, "Here we are now, be very still for a while." and then they had walked softly, cautiously, in the dark shadows of the streets, stealthily gained the lower part of the city next to the docks, and thence to this room, reached here. A light was struck, eclipsing the soft, pale moonlight, and Mother Kurshedan, placing it on a table, surveyed her shrinking victim with satisfaction.

"Do you know me, Chip?" at last she said.

"Yes," replied the child, endeavoring to return her glance with steadiness; "are you going to kill me?"

"No, little fool," returned the old woman, shuddering as she spoke; "but I'm going to keep you with me for a while, to learn you how to talk behaviour. I won't let you move out, nor stir out, nor set to first-floor windows, except from these windows. If you'll be quiet, and won't give me any trouble, I won't harm you; but if you bother me in the least, I'll carry you off and give you to the Indians; remember. You see how nicely I can manage," she added, with an hideous laugh; "how cleverly I got you here, when, I suppose, not less than a thousand persons are on the search for you and me."

The child's face varied, paled, but she caught had her here before many days; she would try to have patience; to wait in peace as far as she could, and as she prayed to lie down in the little bed pointed out to her, weary and foot-sore as she was, it was a comfort to feel that there she knew was something for her. Before she lay down, she knelt, as she had been taught, and audibly repeated her prayers, mingled with tears, for she felt the soft hand that had rested on her head, the tender good-night, the fervent kiss. The Indian woman, pretending not to look, was yet softened at the sight, and as she came to the words, "O Lord, wilt Thou bless all my dear friends who love me, my father, my mother, and Aunt Eunice; and wilt Thou bless all my enemies, if I have any, and those who do not love me; wilt Thou keep me from all danger this night, and help me to fear nothing but to do wrong," a look of terror crossed her face; she felt, for an instant, that there was a power beyond hers, resolute as was her will, and as was her hatred.

CHAPTER XII.

SICK AND IN PRISON.

Le Vaux had altered his will, or rather made a new one, in favor of his daughter, if she should be found within ten years. For many

days after he had ceased to search for her, he continued in a state of depression that alarmed his friends; and Dr. Angell, who watched over his prostration, feared that insanity would ensue. His room was darkened; visitors were not admitted — only the faithful Martha ministered constantly at his bedside, and Nick, who possessed a sporadic [illegible] tendency, begged to sit near him, to pick his hand, to [illegible] his hand [illegible]; but Le Vargn seemed uneasy when [illegible] was present. Martha said "It was natural, as the child was [illegible] own flesh and blood," that she [illegible] the poor little fellow, [illegible], [illegible] in the bedroom of the house, [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] frequently [illegible] the neighbor's [illegible] a [illegible], but Le Vargn invariably [illegible] to bed, and thereby, [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] the house. One day Le Vargn sent the [illegible] Martha [illegible] around. It was the seventh day [illegible] [illegible], and he sat in his bed propped up by pillows. A pale light came in through the one opened shutter, penetrated the blue curtains with which his bed was hung, and gave a ghastly expression to his high, [illegible] and sunken eye. A rustling in the room attracted his attention, and he said,

"Did you find them, Martha?"

No answer was returned, but something sounded on his ear like a [illegible]. Astonished, he listened still more intently; yes, it was certainly a sob, suppressed [illegible] as of some one weeping very quietly. He called again —

"Who is there?" and leaning forward, endeavored to part the curtains, that he might look into the room; but he was too [illegible] to do it.

Martha now entered, and, observing marks of agitation on Le Vargn's face, she inquired the cause.

"It is nothing," replied the sick man, thinking it to be a vagary of his own imagination — but at that moment the sob, sobbing again broke through the stillness.

"Martha," said Le Vargn, starting, "am I hearing, or is there somebody else in the room besides you and me?"

[illegible] turned red as scarlet and she bit her lip, evidently undecided what to say. The sobbing now broke out beyond [illegible], and Martha, with a deprecatory glance somewhere else exclaimed,

"[illegible] sir, but indeed it made my heart ache to see [illegible]. He wouldn't [illegible] out, and as to play, he never thought of it.

"What do you mean, Martha?"

"Why, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] just set down here as [illegible] [illegible], or, as the [illegible] [illegible] pitied that I [illegible] [illegible] through the [illegible] [illegible], or, as he [illegible] sob."

Le Vargn was troubled, broken down in this. He remembered dimly seeing in the gray light of the morning, half dressing, a

child's face at the foot of his bed, but he had been so overpowered by the first night's heavy sleep, that he fancied it a dream.

"Somebody loves me, then," he murmured — "come here, my little fellow. Martha, bring him here."

And the boy stood within the folds of the curtains, pale, with still tears [illegible] down his cheeks, and [illegible] his frame. Le Vesey, [illegible], felt his own eyes fill, and [illegible] up in his arms the boy's head sank upon his bosom, his [illegible] From that moment [illegible] and his [illegible] the [illegible] that had [illegible] the soul of his father. He [illegible] around him, watched him [illegible], and in every way contributed, by his beauty, tenderness, and vivacity, to chase the [illegible] from the unbalanced mind, and restore its functions to comparative health.

All this time Chip was a close prisoner. The Indian had endeavored, with every art she could muster, to disguise her in appearance and in dress, but no [illegible] the sweetness of the child's disposition, and no effort could conceal the spiritual beauty of her face. The nature of the misguided woman turned to [illegible], and, strange to say, her mania took another form, that demonstrated itself in [illegible] of the most lavish endearments. If the child did not instantly meet her on the threshold when she unlocked the door, she would walk the floor in [illegible] anguish. Often in the dead of night would Chip awaken to behold the strange being kneeling by her side, her hands spread over her head, muttering in some unknown language. At first it frightened the poor little thing, but as she felt instantly the kiss of peace, and heard words of the [illegible], she put her hand quietly in that of the Indian, and went softly to sleep. Her [illegible] sometimes had shaped themselves into [illegible]. She could not listen to the words of [illegible], [illegible] her [illegible] [illegible] rapture, but she sat whole hours absorbed in her own dreamy and poetic fancies. She had been taught to write, and the Indian, ever eager to gratify her charge as she had been to [illegible], supplied her with paper and pens and ink, and when her intellect was [illegible], she instructed her with patience and dignity. Mother [illegible], wrecked as she was in mind and body, still possessed much of her original [illegible] and her cultivated mental power. From the age of [illegible] to twenty-[illegible] she had received instructions in the best schools of England. [illegible] In the long winter

evenings the old woman taught her to embroider with beads, and to make many curious ornaments of Indian craft. The walls, white and bare, were covered with sketches in charcoal, which the child gathered from the burnt embers after their meals were over. Sometimes Mother Kurstegan would draw an Indian warrior, with club uplifted and feathery crown, and sometimes the child, gathering her subjects from the beautiful prospect of cloud, sky, and river, would delineate them with rude skill. The little girl had become accustomed to her home. She thought of the past, she loved to speak of Park Dinsmore, and wonder if he missed his "little bird." She could talk freely of him to the old Indian, for Park had shown the latter a kindness at the old inn fireside that she had never forgotten.

The first of August came. The mellow light of a setting sun flooded the harbor, and streamed in through the coarse and tattered curtains that had been hung across the windows to keep out the hot daylight. But now the blinds were thrown back, the old curtains looped to one side by Chip's skillful fingers, the great room was clean, a gentle breeze rustled through, and Chip sat alone, a little back from the open window, nursing her beautiful thoughts, when a thundering knock at the door startled her. She sprang breathlessly to her feet, the blood rippled from her face even to her lips; perhaps the doctor had found her; and with a regret and a great hope that mingled and shot through her heart like lightning, she stood uncertain what to do. Again the knock, louder, more impatient. There was no way of entering; Mother Kurstegan had the key, and she had promised, with solemn words, that terrified her to repeat, that she would never speak or betray her presence by a sign. Her resolution had almost given way, when a German voice shouted from below — the man at the door answered in German, and the person moved on knocking at another door. Chip sat down and cried, and so the Indian found her.

"What! some one came — and did you speak?" she said in accents of terror, her black eyes flashing fire.

"No, no, I was still," said the girl, shrinking back.

"Ah! but you thought some one had come for you; you hoped they would break in the door, tear down the house and carry you away; I know you did."

Chip was silent; she had hoped they would break down the door, but not tear down the house.

"And that after I have brought you these," exclaimed the excited woman, pointing to a bundle, "books, beautiful books, and a box full of colors and brushes, and pictures, and plenty of fine paper, that I risked my very life to buy, and that cost me all I have earned — oh!" she cried, turning away with anguished face, "how can I love her so, and she his child?"

"I am very sorry," said Chip, her face brightening at the enumeration of so many things she had longed for, "I — I don't think — if — if I could see Park sometimes I should feel very bad."

"You would like to see him! poor child, it is a pity if he should die of the fever, that you couldn't see him just once; what are you sobbing for, what are you trembling for?"

"Park is sick with the fever and going to die," cried the child with unmeasurable anguish; "you said so."

"No, he isn't sick at your age — he's bent; he's not sick; he's well, in his own mother's house; and hark, sometime I'll carry you there. Now be quiet and look at those beautiful things. Are you very sure that if you saw Park you would be happy here?"

"Oh! yes, yes, I know I should!" exclaimed Chip.

"Well I'll see, perhaps he'll come on an eagle sometime, and spring into the window." The child jumped; her vivid imagination had made a picture, and she turned to the window as if to catch a glimpse of the outstretched wings, or the handsome face of her friend. The Indian uttered her wild laugh, and for some moments, sitting down on the floor, locking her arms about her knees, her mind wandered. By and by she sprang up, went toward Chip, and encircling her with both arms, she said with earnestness, "You're a pretty creature!" Chip flushed, and she stood quiet hardly knowing how to receive the caresses of her Indian captor. "Your curls have grown since then," resumed the Indian, pulling at the short wings that had emerged from a golden to brown; "take off the cap." Very gladly Chip untied the dirty cotton covering which she had worn daily, and at full the tears, sent tears on her cheeks.

"I wouldn't cut your beauty, sweet child, ever since I heard you pray that first night. I meant to cut your hair off close; I meant to scare you," she added, shuddering as she spoke, "with the tattoo mark — but I couldn't," and she added, solemnly, "there is a higher power than mine. It's been no work of mine that spared you."

Chip still gazed at her vaguely.

"You don't like these clothes, do you?" continued the woman, pointing to the half-jacket, buttoned so that hung loosely on the upper part of the child's body, and the Indian leggins, rudely made, and Indian moccasins under them.

Chip shook her head. The woman mused a moment, her features grew softer, and a human tenderness moistened her eyes with tears. "I will," she muttered, then added, aloud, "I'll get you some better clothes, and you shall go with me and see Park. Le Vaugn is sick on his bed, the doctor's wife out of town, and nobody would know me in these clothes; — she shall see him, though I must get her promise first. Come, we'll have some supper."

Since Chip's abduction, the old woman had dressed in deep mourning, with a black veil over her face. The dress she had purchased of a travelling Jew, and none would suspect the straight, dark woman, in her plaited cap and deep black bonnet, to be the detector whose name had been for years a terror in the city. The humble meal was spread — the supper eaten, and the remains cleared away. As twilight came on, the conspirators grew more confidential.

"There will be a good many cases to-night," remarked the Indian, stretching her wearied limbs; "how this hot blast will take them off. And if the folks would eat spruce, or drink beer, they could save themselves. Well, when Doctor Rush, and Doctor Angell, and the

rest of the great physicians get sick, I guess I'll go to doctoring. Ha! I might make money; I wonder if Le Vaugn's got the fever?"

She looked down; Chip's eyes were fastened on her face.

"What fever?" she asked.

"Oh, you don't know any thing about it; look at the flies over the river — what swarms! clouds like gray smoke — a bad sign, go away from the window, child; this air is poison for you!"

"Shall I light a candle?" asked the little girl, moving toward the hearth.

"Yes, yes — what clouds!" she added, to herself. "Filled with thunder, and no sights of rain! Pough! how the river smells! The pools, too, the water at the wharf, covered with thick green scum; anybody might know a fever would come. What! you've got them out! pretty things! shall I show you how the Indians paint?"

"Yes," replied Chip, with some of her old tremor, and Mother Kunstman painted her face with brown and red and white, and laughed hoarsely. Chip stepped back with a little fear, and the Indian sprang after her, but desisted as, with a scream of real terror, the child flung up her hands.

"It's nothing, child; here, I'll wipe it all off; there, now; take your paper and your brushes and make a pretty picture."

"I don't feel like it," said Chip, sadly; "my head aches."

"What!" cried the Indian, crushing both of the child's hands, which had grown hot, "have I frightened you so? Poor little Chip! poor little darling! there," and holding her close to her breast, she asked, "does your head ache now?"

"Yes, dreadfully," replied Chip, with a tearful, mournful manner.

"No, it don't — no, no; I tell you it *don't* ache; now, see here; your head is as cool as a plantain leaf; look at me; you haven't the least sign of a headache — it's imagination.

Chip shook her head.

"It aches everywhere," she said, with emphasis.

The Indian, with changed manner, sat back and looked at the child. "Then it's all over," she murmured; "she'll die and leave me, just because I care for her; if I hated her she'd live forever."

"When will you take me to Park?" asked Chip, eagerly, and she lifted her eyes, heavy and red, as she very faintly added, "will you take me there to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes, if I don't take you to your grave instead," muttered the Indian to herself, and drawing Chip to her side, she felt her pulse, laid her hand over her forehead, and springing up she muttered: "I must get water and heat it."

Taking a large tea-pail in one hand, and throwing a shawl over her head with the other, she went out, locking the door after her; and Chip sank down upon her little bed, groaning with pain. Presently the Indian returned, built a fire, and putting a small quantity of water on to boil, knelt down and unlacing her boots, taken off her wet shoes, which contained dried sparrow-bones and twigs, and threw a handful into the water, and watched it as it boiled

"Water!" cried Chip, raising herself; "oh, if I could only see Park! May I, to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes," replied the Indian, holding the dipper to her lips.

"And my mother and my father?"

"Yes, yes, if you don't meet 'em in heaven."

"Oh, how I should love to go! If I could only be a bird and fly there!" she murmured, drowsily.

"Oh, this evening the worst thing!" cried the Indian, stooping above her, and noting the purple flush on her eyes, and the darkening color of her lips; "she mustn't sleep!" and hastening back to the fire, she took off the preparation, poured it into an earthen bowl, and carried it to the bedside. Its strong odor filled the room, and the Indian, wakening the child, coaxed and scolded until she drank the mixture, and sank back quietly upon her bed. That night, long after the mourners were gone, an anxious watcher sat in the great, lonely room. The candle threw on the mantel, making grotesque the shadows of the fair little head along the walls. The box of bright shoes lay open on the little table, sheets of paper, fallen on the floor, were scattered about in confusion, and now, drooping her head in momentary forgetfulness, even listening to Chip's labored breathing, and watching the red spot of fever deepen or fade on her cheeks, the Indian woman kept her fitful vigil. Chip looked rather as an angel in the dim light. Her arms, her neck, her hands assumed a transparent whiteness, and her hair lay tossed in short locks upon the dingy coverlet. Without, all was silent, but lights flared along the streets from window to window; in almost every house there was a watcher; and the hot, stifling, murky atmosphere fell down over the whole city like a pall.

CHAPTER XIII.

RECONCILLIATION.

"Where shall I go to-day, doctor?" asked the Quaker's fair wife, of Doctor Neale, as she met him at the door of his office.

"Congratulate me," he said, smiling, taking a letter as he stood on the threshold, and as she looked up in bewildered look, though he was prepared to greet her, — "congratulate me, my wife has been in town. Thank God! I am again a father," and he drew his handkerchief across his eyes; then remembering that she had asked — "go?" he said hastily, looking up and down the hot, [illegible] — "why! poor Le Verga is down, with [illegible] Jim. Ah! 'tis a fearful [illegible] the head."

"Is there no other place?" she asked, hesitating and turning — "no sick women or children?"

"Yes, plenty, but they all of them have some little help, whereas poor Le Vaugn, and Van Alstyne—"

"Van Alstyne!" exclaimed the Quaker's forewoman, a look of consternation spreading over her face—her cheek crimsoning, her hands pressed hard against her heart—"did you say Mr. Van Alstyne had the fever?" she asked in a low, choking voice.

"Yes," replied Doctor Angell, too much engrossed with his own thoughts to heed her agitation—"we will walk along," he added, "or I shall be besieged with misery—yes, Le Vaugn and Van Alstyne are both sick in the same house. Van Alstyne's landlady died last week, since which time the professor has made his home at Le Vaugn's. If either of them die, it will be a great loss to the community, and I have little hope," he sighed as he spoke, looking thoughtfully, longingly toward the sky. The leaves were shriveled, and fell as the doctor and his friend walked underneath the rows of mournful trees, and their feet ground them to powder; there seemed no shadow over any thing—houses, streets—sky, all glaring—bright with a fierce metallic brightness. They moved hurriedly along, past block after block, deserted, ghostly in their isolation from life: past street after street, mighty mausoleums of silence with the mold of the plague gathered upon them. The dead cart rattled by; the sound of its wheels smote upon the heart—so rapid, so business-like it was—jolt, jolt, rumble, rumble, now a laugh from the hard-eyed official who held the reins—now a startling silence, broken by that shout that has fallen upon but few living ears. "Bring out your dead."

Leoline held her emotions in subservience to her powerful will as much as her strength would permit—and yet, oh! what a deadly faintness crept over her very soul as she thought of Van Alstyne, sick, suffering—perhaps dying. Even Le Vaugn's illness struck the chords of her sympathy, and wakened a thrill of pity. She knew of Nick's safety—she thought of him with all the love a mother can feel who has never known what it was to press a babe to her bosom, and she *had* known—ay! drank to the dregs the cup of desertion and deception—whose mingled bitterness had nearly changed her nature, and destroyed her reason.

"At this house, a woman and three children are ill," said the doctor, pausing before a small frame tenement—"what! you will go in—I am glad of it; for there is a good old black woman here but the others are destitute." Nothing more was spoken till they reached Le Vaugn's house. The front door stood open—there were marks of disorder in the hall—a noise as of some one wrestling in the parlor—and there indeed was Le Vaugn with his wife's portrait in one hand, battling with the black man and threatening to kill him if he did not leave the house.

At sight of Leoline, though he did not know her, his frenzy was calmed, and he submitted, reeling and staggering like a drunken man, to be carried up-stairs, where he sat on the side of his bed, but could not be compelled to lie down. What a sight here met the gaze! The splendid mirrors were dashed to atoms, the furniture

broken and defiled in every conceivable manner — the windows held but the sharp and jagged fragments of glass, and the most dire confusion prevailed.

"It is not often that the fever takes this turn," whispered Doctor Angell to Louise, who stood aghast in the midst of the destruction, "it would not be safe to leave you here."

"Van Alstyne," murmured Louise — and this time the passion that rent the sign her voice and trembled in the clasp of her hand did not escape the doctor. He dared not move from Le Vaugn, so he beckoned his servant who stood out of the sick man's sight, to show her the way, while he prepared an anodyne for his patient. He led her to the next chamber, having locked the door between the two rooms, for the greater safety of Van Alstyne, and she stood beside the heavily curtained bed.

"*He's* jest t'ur t'ur way," whispered the black, who yet panted from the effect of Le Vaugn's crazy violence; "but I tinks much more worse;" and he pushed aside the curtain.

"Oh, how white! how deathly pale!" murmured Louise, gazing with an agonized look, "are you sure he lives?"

The black took the pale hand lying apparently lifeless on the gaudy bed-spread; a slight movement showed that there was yet life. Louise knelt and touched the still hand with her lips, murmuring, as the hot tears filled her eyes:

"I may love you safely, now — and you so near God."

"Is there any hope? oh, Doctor Angell! this — these scenes — they — are too frightful!" and her woman's heart gave way — she sank back with a heavy sob, and the tears fell like rain over her face.

"I told you they would be too much for you, my dear friend," said the doctor, gently; "you had better not stay; both of these cases are hopeless — this one especially so. Poor Van Alstyne! he is in the stupor that precedes death, — he must die!"

With one wild shriek Louise fell on her knees at the doctor's feet.

"Save him! save him!" she cried, with wild emphasis "look at me!" She tore off the cap and the band of gray hair, her own locks falling over her shoulders; "I am not old — you see I am as I am in my woman's love and weakness, we love each other — I *can and* give up! doctor, *will* you save him?"

The doctor stood for a moment stupidly gazing down at the supplicant at his feet, so changed, so beautiful! The transformation was startling and complete; then he looked toward the sick bed, saying as he pointed:

"*You* have saved him — see!"

The beads of sweat were standing in great drops on the forehead of the sick man — the crisis had passed and left him even from that ominous stupor, and he opened his eyes for the third and last time once more.

"I have passed quickly," said the doctor, bending instantly above Van Alstyne. "You will be better, my friend," he whispered low and softly; "trust me — you may soon be well again."

"Where is she?" faintly murmured Van Alstyne, and a faint smile hovered around his lips.

"Now you — watching you; [illegible] the worst is over."

"Leoline," [illegible] Jake, [illegible]; "Leoline!"

"Give him [illegible]," [illegible] Angell; "keep his quiet. I hope we may [illegible]; [illegible] we shall know whether [illegible] we?" he added, [illegible] the tears and the power of Leoline, he [illegible]; "I should better [illegible] your Quaker garb —"

"[illegible] to my [illegible]," said the [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible].

The doctor hurried down — Jake the [illegible] remembrancer, stood just inside the hall, holding a [illegible], [illegible], yet beautiful little girl by the hand, and making a dozen awkward obeisances. Catching the child in his arms, the doctor held her to his heart, exclaiming:

"Little Lena! why, my lost lamb, where have you been?"

The child lay sobbing on his shoulder, he turned an inquiring glance toward Jake.

"Why, it was one of the walking cases, you know — though it struck me all in a heap, and she looked so respectable; I didn't see Mother Kurtzman these two years — might be more — but times I, as I saw a well-looked, decent-looking woman standing along, that's a walking case; and I saw at sight, when I came to look in her face, it was her, Mother Kurtzman, the old Indian cutter, and no mistake! Says I 'You sick or broke down?' Says she, 'O God, be merciful!' kind a rambling like, thinkin' of her latter end, may be. Says I, 'Old mother, you're taken with the fever.' Says she, 'Through your [illegible], they had to wash and white as well; O, God, [illegible]!' and then she kept. I underpicked her, and she told me where she lived — so I invited one of the cabs, just [illegible], as it happened to be [illegible] empty, and had her carried home. Well, there I found this child."

"Is the old woman dead?"

"Yes, and buried by this time," replied the teamster, with a stolid indifference.

"Poor Leoline!" [illegible] the doctor. "How came you to know where to bring my sweet lamb?"

"Why, bless you, don't everybody know about the stole child and where it was?" [illegible], [illegible] the fingers through his red hair; "it's the very [illegible] that she kept up in the hole in the country. I [illegible] Leoline to Mary — [illegible]."

"[illegible] — [illegible] pale, child to his bosom, he summoned Leoline.

"[illegible]," [illegible] pale, she murmured faintly, "my mother!"

[illegible] crying, [illegible] "[illegible]!"

"She called you," said Chip, in a low tone.

"And did she — say — did she curse me?" gasped Leoline, with a shudder. "did she speak of Leoline!"

"If you are Leoline, she said she loved you," replied the child, in the [illegible] "and wanted you to forgive her."

"[illegible] child's home in her own; "[illegible] heart, oh, let my mother [illegible] of Jesus, [illegible] — let her have Christian burial!" she supplicated.

"I [illegible] physician, sadly "[illegible] with my own patients, and only [illegible] their bodies; your [illegible] by Leoline's anguish; "it is [illegible] I would I could stop to [illegible] — but give me another [illegible] of the city — out of the reach of infection."

All this he said rapidly.

"No, [illegible] with you," cried the little girl, [illegible] "I [illegible] the fever; I was very sick — I almost [illegible] — [illegible]" and she crept closer to Leoline.

"Very well," the [illegible] replied; "my man will remain till noon," he [illegible] to Leoline; and then [illegible] quickly away, for her [illegible] "I will be round by ten, certainly. I [illegible] Van Alstyne [illegible] by ear; if he is calm after the [illegible] I [illegible] to his child, [illegible] it will be safe to inform him of his [illegible] I [illegible] — [illegible] the stairs, he hurried from the house.

At ten [illegible] Van Alstyne slept, but the pallor of death [illegible] and his face, though it was very white, "[illegible]," he [illegible] to Leoline, who stood near, holding Chip by the hand.

[illegible] the poor child had clung to Leoline, and would not [illegible] her; she [illegible] dread, and [illegible] Leoline's [illegible] upon her own. She [illegible] or [illegible], and clung [illegible] [illegible] the weight [illegible] by [illegible] the [illegible] the latter lay with open

eyes — he had just recovered from a fearful spasm; the most horrible and revolting features of the fever had marked his case — too horrible to be recorded, and he lay now, weak, helpless, his eyes almost starting from their sockets, and swimming in blood. He felt the pressure of the doctor's hand.

"Am I going?" he asked, feebly.

"You must die, Le Vaugn," said the doctor, solemnly. "Have you any directions to give? Shall I send for a minister — or shall I pray for you?"

The dying man was silent — a little tremor on the upper lip, the yellow teeth closing over it, and leaving their imprint in blood — a groan — and he said:

"I would commend my poor child to you, doctor, but she is dead — carried away in that frightful pest-cart."

His voice failed him, and great drops rolled down his sunken cheeks. The doctor, accustomed as he was to sights of misery, wept like a child, and then, in a broken voice, he said:

"Le Vaugn, my dear friend, you are dying, and what I have to say, may hasten your death; but if I can give you one momentary joy before you enter the eternal world — let me say, your daughter is living — is found — is here —" he caught the dying man who, in delirious joy, half sprung from his bed, and trembling in every limb, his features working spasmodically, could hardly articulate — "Quick quick!"

"But lie quietly, or she must not see you — you shall speak to her, bless her.— But do not frighten the child. Come here, darling;" and taking the pale, shrinking creature within the curtain, he whispered, "smile, love — put your hand in his hand — say, Father." The child did all that was required with a wonderful composure. Le Vaugn began moaning like a little infant, and grieving and sobbing, though his exhausted frame would hardly bear the motion of anguish.

"Shall I pray for you, Le Vaugn?" asked the doctor.

"Let me die, let me die," was his only response.

"Do you feel prepared to enter the presence of your Maker?" continued the doctor.

"Let me die — let me die," he repeated, still moaning and sobbing and grieving. Notwithstanding, the doctor knelt down and offered a prayer, beseeching the Eternal to forgive the dying man for His Son's sake. When he rose all was still, and poor little Chip's hand lay within that of a corpse.

It was near the dawn of another sultry day. Leoline, fatigued with watching, sat near a little table on which flickered a taper, almost burnt out. With one hand she shaded her weary eyes, and with the other grasped a book that had been her solace through the sad hours of the desolate night — the Bible. Chip lay near the door, on a little bed made upon the floor, sleeping soundly. A voice roused Leoline, who still retained her Quaker dress; it said —"It is

time; I must rise. She sprang to the bed, and whispered — "Not yet — not yet."

"I've slept beyond my usual hour," replied Van Alstyne. "Why! — how is this? I cannot move — I am entranced; am I sleeping still?"

"You have been very sick, and it is weakness," murmured Leoline, softly.

"Who are you?"

"I am Quaker John's forewoman," replied the soft voice, after pause.

"Where am *I*?" he interrogated.

"In the house of Mr. Le Vaugn."

"Oh! I remember, Le Vaugn was sick, wasn't he? Has he got about yet?"

"He — has — gone — out," replied Leoline; with feigned composure.

"I am glad; they need him very much at the office. Is the fever raging still in the city? — over in Philadelphia, you know, I mean —" he added, as if labouring under some confusion of intellect — "over in the city, in Philadelphia, I mean."

"It is not yet quite subsided," she answered, hearing, as she spoke, the dull rumble of the dead-carts that traversed the streets almost constantly.

"Has anybody been here to inquire after me?" he asked, a moment after. "Have any letters come? I ought not to be lying here; and yet, only think how weak I am!"

"Dr. Angell has been here frequently," replied his watcher, falteringly; "and — and a lady whom you know — Miss Leoline —"

"Oh! has she? *has* she?" exclaimed Van Alstyne, breaking in upon her — a light dawning from his pallid face; "then *she* has not had the fever!"

"No; and she is very anxious for your recovery," added Leoline, in a trembling whisper.

"Is she? Well, that is so kind! so sweet in her. I thought she had forgotten me; I am glad I have been sick. God bless her," he repeated, fervently, more than once. Leoline turned away, affected inexpressibly. "Did you say there were letters?" he asked, after a long pause.

"Yes; the doctor brought one from Germantown," replied Leoline.

"Oh! that is from Perk — my dear friend." After a little silence, he murmured, "I wish I could hear it."

"Shall I read it to you?" asked Leoline.

"Yes, if you please," he said, smiling faintly; "but stop, it is not sealed with black?"

"No; the seal is a beautiful crimson," said Leoline, breaking it, her heart swelling with hope and joy.

"How much your voice reminds me —" murmured Van Alstyne, his words sunk into a whisper.

The gray shadows were melting into a soft, yet uncertain light, as

Leoline prepared to read. She trimmed another lamp, and changing her voice slightly, she commenced as follows.

"My Dear Van Alstyne: No letter from you this week, and I am almost all water upon occasion. I have done every thing to divert my mind from the fears and doubt upon your silence. Your letters are held — or, in fact, my letters addressed to us (and unfortunately few and drearily far between they come), under a large flat stone which I call Druid-Rock's altar, about half a mile from here. There we keep a furnace of charcoal, a pot of vinegar, a tin full of tar, and the Lord knows what else; and our fumigating scenes are inexpressibly funny, for there never was such a scared old fellow as our butler. He takes a pair of the longest and oldest-fashioned tongs to be had in town (they belong to old Squire Hatchings), and he picks the letters up one by one, and holds them over the tar and over charcoal, till I get so impatient, I should like to hold him over them by the same means, and then dips the letters in vinegar, which come up all dripping, and in a very questionable state of deliberation. I have not accompanied him this morning, on purpose to write to you; six times I have run to the window, even while writing these few lines, and yonder comes our old man, and — no letter from *you*. Alas, alas! what can the matter be? but I *will* not think you are sick — oh, Van Alstyne, why did you not come out here with us? Come now; fly to this sweet retreat. The mountain woods are beautiful now; peaches hang on our trees, and blushing apples; the hollyhocks and the walnut-stand in solid pyramid from the base to the point of our splendid hall, just opposite the house; the magnolias still blossom, their snow-like goblets brimming with beauty; oh, Van Alstyne, why are you not here? I could not sleep last night for thinking of you. I have a strange story to tell. One night last week — I think it was Monday — I was called out from the sitting-room. A woman in black met me in the garden. I was fearful of infection, but when she lifted her veil, displaying the features of Mother Kunstegan I forgot all peril. Of course, my first question was of Iona."

The voice of the reader failed — but with a strong effort she conquered her emotion, and continued:

"'I have brought her here, and you shall see her on two conditions,' she said. 'First, you are to ask no questions — second, you are not to detain her a moment beyond my pleasure; if you do, so sure will I bring the plague upon you.' She was banished really; her face (it was a very handsome face) was full of fire; I did feel a momentary dread of the woman, but my heart was yearning to see my little darling, and I promised. She was gone for full five minutes — she brought Iona, but oh, Van Alstyne what a change! Mournful, pale, trembling, her great eyes swimming in tears she seemed afraid to let fall."

"Don't read if it troubles you," murmured the weak voice behind the curtains.

He did not see the struggles for composure the heaving chest, the

blinded eyes, the [illegible] fingers; I'll not hear the long-drawn, yet silent sigh.

"Her cheeks sharpened, her arms white and thin," resumed Leoline, gathering the letter close to her heart, "Van Alstyne, my heart choked me, I drew her to my bosom, and thought I would fly with her to my home, and the [illegible] of my [illegible] retirement there. Van Alstyne, when I think of the suffering of that dear one, I want to live; I want her to live, that she may yet know the blessings of a happy home. It was like tearing soul and body apart to give her up, but she seemed to have been weaned into submission; and, dear one! she seemed so happy only to have seen me. But, Van Alstyne, in the [illegible] [illegible], she made this remark: 'The eagle had pity on the bird, and seemed to love the bird; the eagle may be torn in pieces, but the bird will live, and go back to its golden cage, and sing all its life.' Was not this strange? I hope the Indian has not returned to that frightful city with my darling — may God spare her life!"

"Bring out your dead!"

The hoarse cry sounded above Leoline's voice. She paused; there came a tread of shuffling feet, of smothered whispers in the next room; a breathing past the closed door; muffled foot-steps down the stairs; a low, coarse laugh; the closing of the street-door; a heavy rumbling of wheels; and then was silence she dared not break. The pest-cart had borne away the corpse of Le Vergn.

CHAPTER XIV.

RECOMPENSE.

The plague was over. On the 13th of October there was a heavy rain, the clouds [illegible] [illegible], and the hot, panting, fever-stricken city arose out of its [illegible], and put on fresh garments. From that day the [illegible] decreased, the [illegible] winds swept the [illegible] of death from the grass-grown streets, and a new vitality arose from the [illegible] of destruction. First would be seen one or two shops opened in some deserted portion of the city; occasionally a cart was driven down some [illegible] [illegible]; [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible]; and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]; gradually [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of the houses; [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]; [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]; and the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], the [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the plague had raged. Lemuel Angell had been [illegible], and had narrowly escaped with his life. To Mrs. Angell the season had been one of terror, though God had sent a baby to her heart; but this, absorbing gift as it was,

did not prevent her mind from dwelling on the perils to which her husband, by his noble devotion to humanity, exposed his life daily. But when she received him as from the mouth of the grave, learned once more upon his bosom, and felt the blessed thrill of his fervent kiss, the anguish of the past was all forgotten. And Chip! how she welcomed her! How she thanked God, with tears and fervency, that the peculiar suffering to which she had been exposed was forever past! Chip lay sobbing and laughing within the arms that so tenderly supported her; her haven was reached — a sacred home! There were the books she loved — the beautiful poets who had stirred her nature, till rapture turned to pain; there was the new pianoforte the doctor had bought especially for her. There was her own table with its many drawers, in which her colors, her own choice stock of stationery, her pretty silver-headed pencils, her store of exquisite engravings, all lay as if she had put them back but yesterday, and after a night's refreshing sleep had returned to them again; and then wonder of wonders! there was in the cradle the greatest gift and blessing of all — a miracle of infantile grace and loveliness — a babe who should be hers to fondle and caress. Chip's cup of joy was full. The day was a thousand times brighter because the night had been so dark and stormful, and like a young eagle that has learned to rest upon its own outspread pinions, her soul soared exultingly in this home atmosphere.

Park Dinsmore flittered between Germantown and Quaker John's homestead, spending alternate days in each: Martha and Nick were again established in their wonted dwelling, for Le Vaugn had provided nobly for his faithful domestic, and made arrangements for her still to occupy the home she had loved so long, till the boy Nick should grow to manhood. The whole estate, bank funds, and shares, stock, and interest in the paper, went into the hands of Van Alstyne, who was appointed in trust for the two children, and to whom a liberal salary was secured, thus placing him far above want.

One bright morning, early in the ensuing spring, a carriage drove up to the door of Quaker John; a rustle of heavy silks sounded in the hall. Leoline had returned from a long visit at Mrs. Dinsmore's; she still wore her disguise, but the gray hair, the somber, trailed cap, and the patches upon her cheeks, could not conceal the joy that luminated her whole face.

The Quaker had invited "a company" to his house that day, including Martha and her charge, Doctor Angell and his wife, with Chip. The latter came, bringing the sweet little girl, who, freed from apprehension, had grown blossomingly beautiful. Van Alstyne was there, still pale, for some hidden sorrow weighed down his heart, and now and then the Quaker's brow seemed to cloud for a few moments, but seemed to be busily engaged. In quiet converse the hours wore away.

"Will you walk out?" asked Park Dinsmore of Van Alstyne.

"With pleasure," and they passed from the house together.

"I am so glad you have got the professorship in Yale," said Park after a short silence; "but you seem to be noways elated."

"I am happy at the prospect of still being with you," replied Van Alstyne, smiling a little sadly; "but, to tell the truth, no news gives me much joy."

"Van Alstyne, what makes you so gloomy?" inquired Park, taking his friend's arm. "Is it the loss of poor Le Vaugn, or any dear friend? is it your ill-health? It grieves me to see you so."

Van Alstyne did not answer; they were just turning the corner where stood the old Hantz house.

"See; the door is open," said Park, touching it with his finger; "let's go in, nobody lives here now."

Van Alstyne gladly acceded. A secret longing to enter and look in silence and loneliness upon the walls within which he had spent the golden hours of his life, had more than once possessed him. For Leoline's strange silence he could not account; since his sickness she had been invisible, and even Quaker John, when appealed to, waived the subject and bade him wait, so he had waited till patience was gone, and the gloom of doubt had made him at last, desponding and unhappy. They had ascended the stairs — gained the room to which Van Alstyne led the way, when a low murmur arrested the attention of both. The manner in which the open door stood, enabled them to see the Quaker's forewoman upon her knees, one arm about the boy Nick, talking fondly and earnestly to him, while he, with red cheeks and a boyish bashfulness, gazed in her face. The voice was low — the words were undistinguishable, but they seemed to leap from a passionate and long-smothered love. She pressed back his locks, and gently kissed him on the forehead — then, as if she could no longer restrain her feelings, caught him to her bosom, and rained kisses upon his brow, cheek, and lips, before he could disengage himself from her embrace. Suddenly starting at sounds of a footstep, she sprang to her feet, and with a voice of alarm, "Who is there?"

Park retreated, but Van Alstyne, whispering, "We will not seem to be listeners," advanced, saying, "I beg your pardon, madam, we came up to look over the old house, never for a moment imagining we should find it occupied."

The woman had grown pale; she calmly accepted his apology, and still was silent.

"Pardon me, madam," Van Alstyne said, again approaching her with much agitation; "will you not give me some information concerning the lady who formerly occupied these rooms? I promise you, on the honor of a gentleman, I will not abuse your confidence; it is of great importance that I should see her before I leave the city — perhaps never to return."

"You shall see her," murmured Leoline, turning to go in the little room adjoining, and shutting the door.

Van Alstyne grew white.

"What does it mean?" whispered Park. "If it *should* be?" and he started as the thought broke upon him; "amazement! what if the Quaker's forewoman should be Leoline, after all?"

The door opened again, and it was Leoline's self who entered, pale, sweetly beautiful, garbed in black, and advancing toward Van Alstyne

said: "No longer the Quaker's forewoman, but simply Leoline, now and forever."

Van Alstyne clasped her outstretched hand in both of his, but his great emotion would not let him speak.

Park stood by, bashful, yet smiling, as many past occurrences, meetings, and gatherings rushed through his mind. At last Van Alstyne broke the silence, exclaiming:

"Can it be possible? *Can* transformation be so complete Leoline, you astonish me. I am bewildered beyond expression. I believe it impossible —"

"For women to keep secrets?" suggested Park, roguishly

"No — I did not mean — I was not going to say that; but then the skill! the admirable self-possession — I am just astounded — but so happy! so very happy."

"Perhaps," said Leoline, checking his rapture, "we had all better return to the house; it is chilly here. Come," and she held out her hand to Nick, who, apparently fascinated with the beautiful woman, put his hand confidingly within her clasp.

"I am his guardian," whispered Van Alstyne, impulsively (Park had hurried on before them); then noting the flush and extreme emotion of his new-found love, he added: "Dearest, you are as holy in my eyes as an angel. Forget the past — I could not live without you — I should have died, Leoline."

She gave him one grateful look; tears were in her eyes, tears of rapture, of perfect happiness. She had found rest. She had tried him — his patience — his truth — his nobleness — and he was great in all. This atoned for the cloud that had ever rested on her life She entered the parlor, modestly clinging to Van Alstyne's arm.

"I see — it's all right," said the doctor.

"Well she *is* a splendid woman!" said Park; "and now, Van Alstyne, you'll be married, and settle down; and I'm going to college, to stay four years — then shall return — marry Lena — she'll be sixteen, and we're engaged," he added, demurely; "sure as you live," he continued, seeing a smile on the face of the professor; "Lena's little, but she knows enough to love me."

We look into the handsome cottage on the outskirts of the city, to take a last glance at Masty's honest features, as she sits in her own "boughten" home; and we see the homely inn, where the wife and baby of bald-headed Job are still crying in concert — and catch a glimpse of the redoubtable Snackskin, hanging out her clothes, as she shouts in shrill treble:

"I ain't got nothin' to do — no, nothin' in the world."

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